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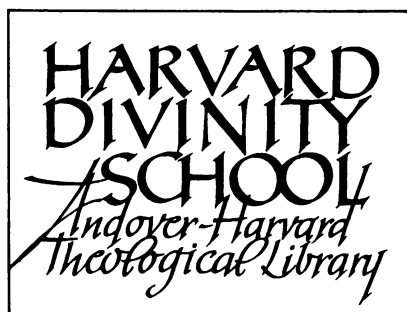
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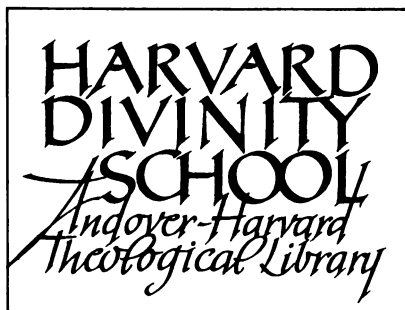
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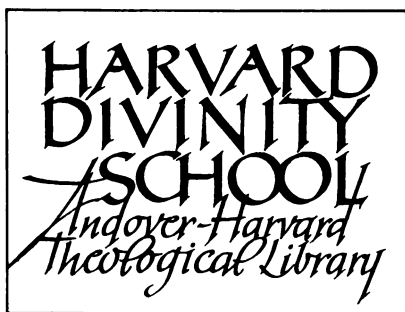
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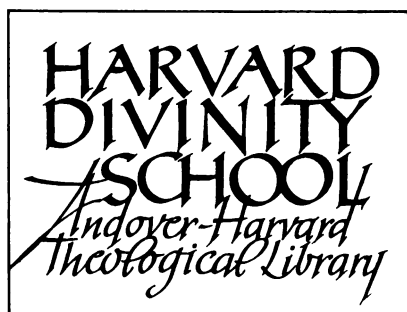
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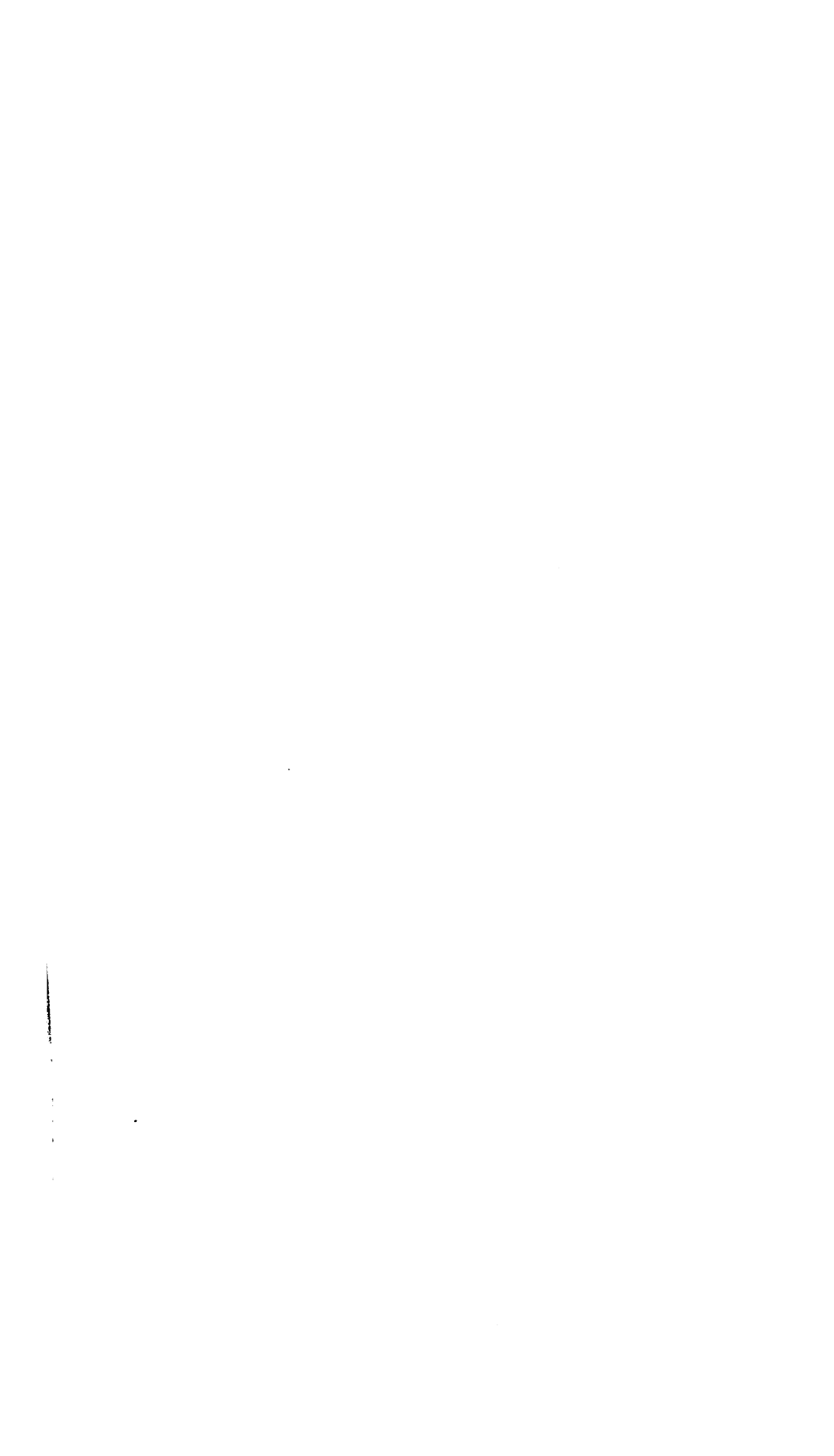
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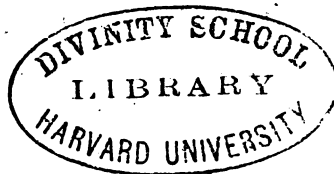
COURSE OF LECTURES
IN DEFENCE
OF
THE FINAL RESTORATION.

**DELIVERED IN THE BULFINCH STREET CHURCH,
BOSTON, IN THE WINTER OF EIGHTEEN
HUNDRED AND THIRTY TWO.**

BY PAUL DEAN.

I am set for the defence of the Gospel.—PAUL.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY EDWIN M. STONE.
1832.



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PREFACE.

THE subject presented to the mind in these lectures, is one of the deepest interest to the reader. Whether we shall be personally happy, is a question of the highest concern to every rational being ; and whether the world will be made virtuous and happy is one of the highest general interest to all mankind. In the same ratio as we feel concerned in the event, shall we feel interested in the means by which that event is to be effected ; and therefore the revelation of the gospel, being the only method by which either the knowledge or happiness of heaven can be acquired, will ever command our most devout consideration.

Even that view of religion which promises the salvation of a part of the world only, is infinitely to be preferred to infidelity, which sweeps the whole world to one common grave of oblivion. But that view of the gospel plan advocated in this course, embracing, as it does, the universal restoration, and that, without setting aside the necessity of experimental and practical godliness, or weakening the motives to a good life, must always commend itself to the approbation and the best wishes of every truly benevolent and philanthropic heart. And if, as we sincerely believe, it has the united support of revelation, who would not wish to understand and believe, as well as to support it ?

Although we thus speak, and speak it to the honor of human nature, yet we apprehend and fear that the self-

ish and narrow minded will feel but little interest in it ; that the worldly minded will despise its good tidings, and neglect its reasonable injunctions ; and that the wicked and abandoned will prefer something else, and that for the same reason that such persons in the days of our Saviour chose darkness rather than light, "because their deeds were evil."

No hope of gain, or desire of polemic fame, has induced the publication of these lectures. The principal object of their being given to the public, especially without that thorough revision, which a firmer state of health and more leisure on the part of the author, would have afforded, is the gratification of many friends who heard them, and desired the opportunity of reading them. Also a wish to afford the community, and particularly the religious public, a more general and condensed account of the sentiments of the Restorationists, and of their reasons for the adoption and support of them.

Leaving to others, better qualified for it, the task of gratifying the literary taste of an enlightened public, it has been my aim to offer the sincere and plain inquirer after religious truth, a sure and safe guide to its attainment. And to place religion in such a light as that while it has the full support of the Bible, and the perfect approbation of its Divine Author ; it may also command the respect and veneration of all good men, and receive the hearty assent of every reasonable and unbiassed mind. If in ever so small a degree these objects shall be realised—if the skeptical shall be established in the love of truth, and made more friendly to religion, then will my humble effort be rewarded.

Of the correctness of the sentiments advanced, and of the validity and conclusiveness of the reasoning adduced in their support, the reader will judge for himself, after a candid, faithful and impartial examination. The writer can only say, they are such as he most sacredly believes to be according to scripture, justice and sound reason. And such as he is fully persuaded, will, when received and reduced to practice, promote the peace and happiness of society, by affording the best grounds of faith in the gospel, the best motives to the practice of virtue, and the strongest incentives to universal good will among men.

It has been the aim to treat all denominations and parties with respect and kindness ; while at the same time great plainness has been observed in regard to their sentiments, so far as they have been alluded to. The modern scheme, which limits rewards and punishments with all motives of virtue and religion to the present life, has been alluded to incidentally, and opinions of its character and tendency expressed with honest frankness, and from a conscientious sense of duty ; but without attempting its general investigation ; such investigation not coming within the scope of our prescribed limits and design. The same remark is true of several other topics and opinions, which have received more or less notice.

In a similar way, the subject of temporal death has been treated as wholly a physical matter, not affecting in the least the moral relation between the soul and its Maker—not changing the nature of his moral government over it, or its own moral power to comply with his requirements ; and not therefore placing it beyond the means of grace, such as are suited to its condition, it being still

under the gracious government of Christ. This is thought to be the most scriptural, rational, and consolatory view of death. Yet there is as wide a difference between the future emendatory punishment of the wicked as we view it, and the Papal doctrine of purgatory, as there is between the punishments of this life and purgatory.

An intermediate state of moral conscious existence for the soul between death and the resurrection, has also been considered, as sustained by the word of God, and by the economy every where observable in the works of Jehovah, which would ill justify the useless sleep of Abraham and others, from their early death to the resurrection. This state is also required by the divine impartiality in the bestowment of the means of grace, which are certainly not equally bestowed on men in the present life ; instance the heathen, idiots, infants, to say nothing of others ; and hence if the means of grace are ever equalized, they must be equalized in an intermediate state. Further, there are many promises of God which are not accomplished in this life, and if there be no conscious state between death and heaven, they never can be.

These subjects are here alluded to merely to throw light on some passages in the lectures ; but as this view of death and the conscious state of the dead are calculated to obviate many difficulties in theology, they will, no doubt, soon receive an ample discussion, and be shown to be scriptural, honorable to God, and beneficial to men.

With these few remarks, the following course of lectures is, with humble diffidence, submitted to a liberal public ; and that they who read may be blessed of heaven, is the fervent prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

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LECTURE I.

QUESTION STATED, AND ITS IMPORTANCE.



ACTS III. 20, 21.

AND HE SHALL SEND JESUS CHRIST, WHICH BEFORE WAS PREACHED UNTO YOU: WHOM THE HEAVEN MUST RECEIVE, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, WHICH GOD HATH SPOKEN BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS HOLY PROPHETS SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN.

THIS evening we commence a course of lectures in defence of the Universal Restoration and Eternal Happiness of all Mankind, and of its salutary influence on the hearts and lives of the followers of Christ, as a doctrine of revelation.

In pursuing this subject we shall observe the following plain method:—1. State the question, and its importance; 2. answer some of

the most weighty objections frequently urged against its truth and moral tendency ; and 3. exhibit the proofs of its being a christian sentiment, and worthy of all acceptance.

Though in departing from the usual and practical method of preaching observed in this *desk, we shall for a few evenings seem to buckle on the armour of the controversialist, it is not because we delight in controversy, feel happy in its troubled atmosphere, or are animated by the hope of gathering laurels of victory on its disputed heights ; but because a sense of duty has compelled us to publish and attempt to vindicate our views of this most interesting subject, and thus cast our mite into the treasury of divine truth for the satisfaction of friends, the honour of Christ, and the advancement of his kingdom in the world. And should it please God, in any degree, to make this humble effort the instrument of accomplishing these objects, to his name be the glory.

Nor do we come to this work with the least hostility of feeling towards any denomination of christians, or any bitterness of spirit to those who differ from us ever so widely in their religious opinions ; and, therefore, we cheerfully pledge ourselves to observe the most scrupulous candour in relation both to the persons and sentiments of all whose opinions we may have occasion to mention. Just cause of the slightest

offence shall not be intentionally given to any person of christian feelings, or of any sentiments whatever, who may use the freedom to attend this discussion; so that no one may have occasion to fear that misrepresentation of his sentiments, or that gross personality and abuse which have too often degraded christianity in the eyes of its enemies, and rendered controversy disgusting; when otherwise it might have been a powerful and successful auxiliary to the triumph and spread of sacred truth. Desiring the hearer to dismiss from his mind all prejudice for, as well as against, the doctrine we are about to advocate in these lectures, till after a patient and attentive hearing, (for he that hears with too strong a prepossession for, or against, hears to little advantage, and can never be an impartial judge,) we assure him that we shall not content ourselves by being merely candid, but shall speak under a deep sense of responsibility to the God of truth, for the correctness of the opinions we shall offer: and let him that heareth remember also his own high obligations, so to hear as to understand and judge according to truth.

We shall regard the scriptures as the only standard of revealed truth, and studiously seek their direction in all we utter; and while we speak according to the words of holy men that spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, let all the people say amen.

The passage of inspiration which we have placed at the head of this discourse, asserts that the restitution of all intelligent and fallen creatures to virtue, order, and eternal happiness, is a divine truth, purposed by Jehovah from eternity, and published more or less clearly by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began; and that times or dispensations for the beginning and completion of this most glorious work, have been set in the counsels of heaven; and also that the ever blessed Saviour, who had, according to the testimony of prophets and the preaching of apostles, began it by his ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, would, at the completion of those times, be again sent from thence to finish this most transcendent enterprise, which will forever remain the theme of admiration to saints and angels, and of glory to God and the Lamb.

But before we proceed to reduce these sentiments to a single question, we ask leave here to make a more general statement of what we conceive to be some of the first or fundamental principles of revelation; that the bearing of the question on those principles, may be the more easily seen and felt. They are these:

1. The moral government of God is a most perfect plan, called in scripture his counsel, will, purpose, pleasure; according to which he works all things in the dispensations of revela-

tion, for the accomplishment of the noblest of objects, i. e. the greatest good of the universe; in relation to which, he is said to see the end from the beginning.

2. All moral and accountable beings were created and destined to serve and enjoy God forever, as their chief good; for God is love, and the Lord is good to all.

3. Though all men were created holy, and for perfect happiness, yet they all having sinned and come short of glory no one can now be saved but by being restored to virtue; for without holiness no man can enjoy God or heaven.

4. Therefore God being no respecter of persons, sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

5. Death having reigned from Adam to the coming of Christ, therefore, that he (Christ) might be the Saviour of all, dominion was given him over the dead in their separate state, as well as over the living in this and the resurrection state; for he is declared to be Lord, and Judge, and Saviour, of the dead and living; so that all will be judged, and all will be saved during the reign of the Messiah.

6. The gospel is the only method of salvation for sinners; for by grace are ye saved, through Jesus Christ, the only name given whereby we must be saved.

7. Death, therefore, being physical and per-

taining to the body, can make no moral change in man; for whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, to be rewarded if faithful, to be punished if impenitent, being under the same Lord, and subject to the same moral laws after as before death.

8. So long as men continue in sin, or impenitency, so long they will continue to be punished according to their characters, as attested by their works; but when they exercise repentance toward God, he will, through the blood of Christ, grant them the remission of the sins that are past, and justify and save them by faith in Jesus.

9. The means employed by Christ for the salvation of the world, i. e. faith and repentance, must finally and universally succeed, for the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; and he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

10. The subjection of all things to Christ will be the same, in character and spirit, as will be the subjection of Christ to the Father in conjunction with his kingdom; therefore, when he resigns his kingdom, it will be perfect in its extent, and in the character of its subjects: and thus God will be all in all.

Now by adopting these principles in connexion with the text, which appears to be supported most clearly by the general voice of scrip-

ture, we inevitably come to the conclusion of the universal restoration of all mankind to virtue and purity; and believing in the universal restoration, we necessarily arrive at the result of universal and eternal happiness, which is universal salvation.—None will be saved who are not first restored; and none that are or shall be restored will fail of salvation.

The text speaks of this great work as having times, i. e. periods or dispensations, set for its progress and completion; and elsewhere, the scriptures speak of its being finished in the fulness of times: so that we have no scriptural authority for supposing it will be performed for all men, individually or collectively, at death, or any specified time, short of the fulness of times.

The question, therefore, which we are now to discuss, is not whether any or all will be saved without genuine faith in Jesus Christ—whether any or all will be made happy without first being brought to feel a sincere and godly sorrow for sin, and an ardent thirst for holiness? This we have no reason to believe or expect.

Nor are we here to discuss the question whether all men, christian or pagan, saint or sinner, penitent or impenitent, will escape all guilt, remorse, and mental suffering for sin, in or at the article of temporal death, and be forever after equally and eternally happy? Neith-

er reason nor scripture, justice nor equal mercy, offer us the least grounds for believing they will.

But this is the all important question, we ask you to consider and be able to answer, viz:—Whether all men will or will not, by the means of grace and the power of God, be brought to be true christians? Or in other words, Will all men, according to the scriptures, and consistently with the attributes, will, and government of God, be finally made pure and happy through Jesus Christ, or not?

Some we know think, or say they think, this to be a question of mere idle curiosity, while others esteem it an impious question which ought never to be started, especially in public; but from both these classes of Christians, we are, after serious deliberation, compelled respectfully, but widely, to differ.

Such, my brethren, is the importance of this subject, and such the deep and everlasting interest which we and the world have in its decision, that it becomes us reverently to pause—and seriously to consider, that if we may truly answer it in the affirmative, relative ourselves, it will present to our encouragement in duty, our comfort in affliction, and our hope in death, heaven—all that can constitute us happy.—But if we are compelled to answer it in the negative—O then! how will the scene be

changed ! to paralyze the last resolve to virtue, to cast off the last hope of affliction, and to add eternal despair to the pains and anguish of death, there will be presented to the soul the horrors of the worm that never dies ! and the storm of vengeance that never ceases to rage !—On one side of this question is all that hope, and heaven, and eternity, can offer to our enjoyment ; and on the other, all that fear, despair, and ever-enduring and ever-increasing wo can inflict. Equally so is it with every friend of ours, and with every individual of the human race ; if therefore any one of the vast family of man be eternally lost, it must not only be the friend, parent, child, endeared to others by the ties of nature and mutual feelings, but it must be some one himself, to whom happiness is as dear as to ourselves—and whose aversion to sufferings is equal to our own. This thought should certainly cause us to take and feel a high interest in the true answer to the question, whether all will be finally virtuous and happy, or not, as well as whether we ourselves shall be saved or not. Yet in the examination of this question, let us endeavour to lay apart all selfish interest which we have in its answer, while we further examine, not only its general importance, its importance in connexion with the character of God, of Christ, of the Scriptures, and of the morality, comforts,

hopes, and devotion of mankind ; but also the evidences and arguments for and against it : that if possible we may decide it impartially, according to the force of truth and evidence. The affirmative of this subject, sheds a peculiar lustre on the character of Deity.—It represents him as having wonderfully and fearfully created and made of one blood, all the nations of the earth, for the noblest object, as having extended over them a father's tender and watchful care, and when they erred as children and became the miserable slaves of sin and death, he mercifully projected the scheme of redemption, which his grace and power shall, in due time, carry into the most complete execution. What can so much endear his government to his rational creatures, as for them to feel it is founded in infinite goodness, and administered for the eternal and equal happiness of all its subjects ? What could so much endear him to them, as for them to know that he is love, and that all his administrations are equal and perfect goodness, resulting finally in their equal and everlasting welfare ? Every man should be taught that God is the all-gracious author of his being, the wise disposer of his fortune, and the unchanging friend of his happiness ; and of the peace and happiness of all others, no less than of their own ; then will they seek his protection, and delight in his service ; then will they be desirous

of imitating him, whom they are constrained equally to love and reverence for his goodness and greatness.

Nor is this sentiment less important to the character of Christ ; it teaches that he came from heaven to be the compassionate friend and the all-sufficient Saviour of sinners, yea of a whole sinful and lost world—it teaches that he was impartial in his kindness, in his sympathy, and in his sufferings, having tasted death equally for every creature. So benignant was his whole ministry on earth, that no sinner could ever say he has neglected to warn me of the evil of sin on every proper occasion ; that he ever neglected to sympathize in my sufferings, not only, but to relieve them by deeds of mercy and power such as man never did : or that he ever ceased by his words to pour the light of heaven on my benighted mind, or by the energies of his spirit, to wake up in my soul the emotions of peaceful gratitude, and to enliven and strengthen the latent and trembling hopes of heaven in my heart, whenever I sought him. So just, and good, and gracious was Jesus to all, that there is no one who has not occasion to say of him, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. How differently would the character of our Lord have appeared had he come to call the righteous, but leave the sinner to perish—had he come to bless the

rich, but leave the poor to their destruction, or had he come to save the poor, but leave the rich to pass on the high way to eternal ruin ! Certainly it must be for the honour of Christ that those whose duty and office it is to invite and persuade all men to come unto him and be saved, should feel authorized to say, unhesitatingly to say, to every and each of them, Jesus is really, and will prove himself to be your Saviour and Judge.

If it be found that the holy scriptures contain a clear expression of the restitution of all things, attested by the united witness of all the holy prophets, and confirmed by the authority of Jehovah, it must greatly enhance the value of that sacred book in the estimation of every truly benevolent soul, and offer an increased motive to every man to become thoroughly acquainted with the rich treasures it contains. It does, or does not contain a revelation of salvation for the whole world, and equally true is it that it does, or does not contain salvation for me or you, and of the way by which we are to attain its possession ; for if it may not contain salvation for all, then it may not contain it for me or you. Then suppose we turn over its inspired pages, believing that they contain the awful record of eternal death for some the human race, and of course feeling that we are liable to meet therein our own doom to never ending perdition,

what; ask yourselves, what would be the anxiety and fearful suspense with which we should read? Could we read it with the same earnestness and hope, the same interest and love that we should do if we felt assured that as soon as we become truly acquainted with it, and felt the power and virtue of its heavenly truths, we should be blessed and made wise unto salvation? Would any one dig in a field for a treasure with as much faithfulness and perseverance upon uncertainty, as he would with the assurance, that by so doing, he should gain an invaluable treasure of wealth and happiness? Most certainly he could not. The bible will never be perused by all men, old and young, rich and poor, as it should be, and with the interest and feelings it ought, till they are invited thereto with affectionate concern by the ministers of the cross, and urged by the plenary assurance that they will find there that heavenly wisdom to guide them in duty, that rich solace in affliction and that blessed hope of immortality, which can no where else be found—those rewards for virtue, and those faithful warnings of evil; that blessed panoply of light, and holy armour of God; and those testimonies of Jesus, and life giving words of Jehovah, which open to the soul beyond the dispensations of time; the finished work of grace, the glories and joys of a paradise above, for themselves and

the world, no where else to be obtained but in this holy treasury of the Lord. When these views of the scriptures prevail, then will the books of infidelity be given up, the bible be read with the the purest delight, and the words of the Lord be sweet as in the days when Jesus spake, and they that heard were healed.

But after all the sentiment under consideration is more immediately interesting to man as a moral, social, and devotional being. We cannot resist the persuasion that a morality founded on the principles above laid down, would be most pure and exalted ; and therefore, most conducive to human happiness. The basis of morality, such as Jesus taught, is supreme love to God, and true benevolence to man ; and the fruits thereof in the conduct of life, is the morality itself. Now as like produces like, will it not induce us to love God to know that he is good to us ; and strengthen that love, to know that he is equally good to all as to us ? And will it not also naturally produce in us a regard to the welfare of mankind to feel that they are all our brethren ; responsible to the same moral government ; bound to perform to us the same duties that we are to them ; and with us destined to dwell forever in the blessed associations of celestial virtue and happiness ? The very fact that God will ultimately deliver all from sin and suffering, proves that

he will not allow us, with impunity, to inflict on any creature of his, through revenge or malevolence, the least degree of unjust or unmerciful sufferings ; and is thus happily adapted to restrain the vicious propensities of the sinful heart.

What then tends so naturally to awaken the best feelings of our nature, both towards God and man, and to restrain the bad propensities of the soul, must as it prevails, exert a commanding and heavenly influence on the moral intercourse of the world, till society on earth shall resemble the blessed society of heaven. But we know, and are sorry for it, that it is by many, whom we respect for their piety and virtue, strenuously objected to this sentiment, that were it to prevail it would have an intirely different effect on the moral feelings and conduct of men ; which will be considered, and an answer attempted, in its proper place. And in the interim, should any of you, my hearers, wish to try the case for your own personal satisfaction, you may for the sake of such trial, suppose society to be divided into two great classes, one of whom you know will be converted to Christ and reign with him forever ; the other will forever revile him and sink to endless perdition ; then ask yourselves if you could as sincerely sympathize in the present sufferings of one as of the other of those clas-

ses, extend the hand of relief as warmly to the one as the other, and feel as sacred obligations to seek the perpetual good of the one as of the other ? And thus we are assured you will be able to decide for yourselves the relative influence of the two schemes, viz. partial and universal restoration ; and give the decided preference to the one under consideration.

That this doctrine possesses a peculiar power when cordially embraced by a strong faith, to "smooth the rugged path to life along a vale of tears," solace the mourner's heart when riven by the loss of its dearest earthly joys, and to cheer and strengthen the departing trembling soul, with the all-sustaining hopes of heaven, will not, cannot be doubted. O my God ! let us have its aid in misfortune's gloomy hour ; when bending over the sick, or waiting at the dying couch of kindred or of friends ; then may its balmy spirit gently bedew us ; but most of all when wearied and exhausted by sickness, we are called to tread the dark and gloomy valley, O then may its heavenly light shine about us, and drive from before us the soul-chilling gloom of death !

And lastly, strange as it may appear to some, we are constrained to view it of the highest importance to the exercise of true and elevated devotion. This is by far the most difficult of all christian duties to perform ; so imperfect

are our views of our heavenly Father, so mistaken our apprehensions of happiness, and so selfish and alienated are our feelings to our fellow creatures by reason of sin, that we need much grace to aid us in giving ourselves wholly to the service of God, in the obedience of his word, and the cheerful and hearty performance of all that various good we are capable of doing to our fellow men, not only to the good but the evil, and all for the Lord's sake.—Fear and dread of misery, here or hereafter, unassisted, can never produce it ; with these, if they exist, must be united the truth that enlightens and the grace that saves the soul from sin. What therefore can so effectually assist us in this pure and heavenly exercise as a belief that God in his infinite mercy is in Christ, and will fully reconcile all things to himself in perfect bliss ? We solemnly appeal to the believer in endless punishment, whether it be possible for him to feel as much devotion of heart when he prays for a sinner, feeling at the same time that that sinner will certainly go to perdition, as he does when he prays for one that he feels and hopes will be converted and made happy ! Let us now conclude this lecture by placing before us for our imitation in spirit at least, the brightest example of devotion ever witnessed by or given to men—that exhibited by our Saviour at his death. A life of perfect virtue finished,

he presents himself an offering to God—in view of the awful sufferings of the cross—says, not my will but thine be done—and as the crimson, cleansing, pardoning tide flowed from his hands, his feet, his temples, his side, his heart, in a love to his bitterest enemies stronger than death, he said with his expiring breath, father forgive, my death will conquer, and the vilest shall yet love thee.

Before we advance the proofs of this doctrine to which we do sincerely attach such high importance, we shall out of respect to its opposers, notice and answer a few important objections. First, Some object to the truth of this sentiment, because they think God has limited salvation by his decree—which presupposes eternal personal election and reprobation.—On this subject we shall treat the next evening.

LECTURE II.

OBJECTION I.



ROMANS XI. 5.

**EVEN SO THEN, AT THIS PRESENT TIME ALSO, THERE IS A
REMNANT ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION OF GRACE.**

ACCORDING to the proposal made the last evening, we are now assembled to consider the doctrine of election as the first, and by many supposed to be the most valid objection against the scheme of final and universal salvation. All must admit that if salvation be limited in its design, it must be so by the decree of God ; and that decree is by the objector called election. The bible, we cheerfully admit, contains the doctrine of election ; but not that view of it entertained by those who make it an objec-

tion to our sentiments. We shall, therefore, for the sake of method, state the view and grounds of the objection, with our reasons for not admitting them scriptural; and then give what we understand to be the bible view of election, by which it will appear that it favours rather than opposes the affirmative of the great question at issue.

Preparatory to that statement; let it be observed, that election in whatever view we consider it, must be the unconstrained and free act of that great and good Being, whose perfections are infinite, and whose attributes extend equally to all creatures of the universe; and who being the perfect Father of the spirits of all flesh, and by the current voice of revelation and Providence, declared to be good and merciful to all his works; can be no respecter of persons, nor have the least arbitrary and original preference for the happiness of one, or one part of his creatures over the others.

Further be it remembered, that when God created man, he created him upright and holy, and pronounced him good; at which time he must have loved him, and designed his happiness. Though the crown has fallen from the head of him that was thus created in honour, the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed, and man without exception become

subject to vanity, sin, and death, yet God has not changed.

And it is certain that if any are made truly happy, they must first, and that by their Maker, be restored to the spiritual, practical, and habitual purity in which they were at first created.

Now under these circumstances, God being unchangeably good, and mankind equally sinners and equally unable to reinstate themselves, under these circumstances we ask, would it be reasonable for us to suppose that the Deity in the exercise of his favour for the recovery of lost men, would select some, and pass by and leave others to perish forever? We appeal to you that are parents, could you so do among your own children in a similar case? Nay, more, we appeal to you, if any such there are here, and we doubt there are many, who have felt the power of divine grace kindling up in your souls the feelings of benevolence and concern for the eternal welfare of all mankind, such in some degree as the blessed Saviour felt when he left the bosom of the Father, and that which animated the holy apostles when they left wives and children, through persecution and death to preach the gospel to the world—would it be possible for you under the influence of the same spirit, to place before you the world of sinners, and then deliberately select those

you would have redeemed to the exclusion of the rest ?

Having brought the mind of the attentive hearer to feel the decision to which reason and christian feelings would lead us were we allowed to follow them, we shall now seek the advice of the standard of truth, to which after all, we must all appeal, to the scriptures.

In doing which, we shall, as already proposed, state the objection in its clearest light, that we may the better judge its true character.

The doctrine of election, as understood by those who urge it as an objection to universal salvation, is this, viz :—The decree of God by which from all eternity he determined of his own good pleasure to select some of all nations for eternal glory, and appointed and made irresistably efficacious all the means of grace to effect that end, without the least reference to works done, or to be done, which necessarily implies the endless perdition of all the rest, and the certain inefficiency of all means apparently used for their salvation—in a word that God created some to be unconditionally, certainly, and endlessly happy, and the residue of mankind to be unconditionally, certainly, and endlessly miserable ? This doctrine has been supported by St. Augustine and some others among the fathers, and strongly advocated by Calvin in that article of his institutes, Henry,

Doddridge, the assembly of Divines at Westminster, and most of their followers in all ages down to the Orthodox of the present day. Some difference in modes of expressing it, and some variation in the manner of defending it, have obtained, but the spirit, substance, and effect to be ultimately produced by it has been and is the same—nor do we see that it is at all possible substantially to alter it, without directly or indirectly rejecting its truth.

The leading points in this view are these :

1. The object of election is eternal and always the same, though expressed by different terms in scripture, such as elect, choose, appoint, ordain, will, &c. i. e. those who are elected or chosen are not elected to any office, temporary good, or national distinction, but to eternal GLORY. 2. To this act of favour God was wholly self-moved, having no reference to the natural or moral qualities of the persons elected. 3. The result of this election is in all cases certain, unconditional, and in no possible way, liable to be contingent in regard to any one individual of all the elect. 4. It necessarily includes by implication the everlasting and certain doom of all the non-elect to unceasing and inconceivable sufferings in eternity. The last of these points, however, more particularly distinguishes the adherents of this doctrine from all other religionists.

Much as we are opposed in sentiment to this doctrine, we deem it but fair to acknowledge the slanderous saying, which has been often repeated, viz:—that it admits men to heaven without reference to personal holiness, is a mistake; for though God elected them without regard to their personal holiness or sinfulness, yet he does not, and will not admit them to heaven without their being first made perfectly and personally holy; and that by the means of grace provided in the gospel, and provided for all equally: yet it is equally just to remark that though the means of grace are general, they are not designed, and therefore, cannot in a single instance, prove effectual to salvation, save in the cases of the elect where they are certain to be so.

In support of this doctrine there has been much subtile and metaphysical reasoning of talented school men employed; but we shall here only notice a few of the prominent passages of scripture, which have been mostly relied on for its authority:

Our text declares “there is a remnant according to the election of grace”—and verse 7th, “the election hath obtained it.” Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13.—St. Paul says, “the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil; that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works but

of him that calleth. It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Also, the same author writing to the Ephesians says, i. 4, 5.—"According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." And again, 2d Thes. ii. 13.—"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth."

From these portions of the oracles of God, the advocates of eternal, personal election, and reprobation, appear to think the following conclusions irresistible: 1. Those who are to be admitted to heaven are a REMNANT. 2. They were from eternity selected and chosen from the rest of mankind. 3. That God loved the elect, and hated the non-elect from the beginning, as it appears plainly in the case of Jacob and Esau. 4. Therefore he chose the elect because he freely and eternally loved them, and left or reprobated the rest of the human race because he freely and eternally hated them, or disapproved of their salvation, and not at all on account of

any works, good or evil ; for neither party had done good or evil at the time of their election. And 5. That the way by which he determined to save those he predestinated to glory, was by sanctification of the spirit, and the belief of the truth : all which was designed and will terminate for the glory of his infinite and free grace in Jesus Christ ; and therefore, the only hope of salvation is founded on election.

Having stated the argument in favour of this view of election in its clearest and strongest light, we ask what objection is there to this interpretation ? To which we answer, it does not give the true and most obvious sense of the passages it professes to interpret. 1. The remnant preserved from idolatry in the days of Elijah, were not appointed exclusively of all others at that time, to have their names written in heaven ; but they were reserved in mercy to that rebellious people, as seed in the midst of them, though hid even from the eyes of the prophet, which should germinate and produce among them a harvest of true worshippers, to the living God.

Also, the remnant left to that same people in the apostle's day, which Jesus says prevented their being entirely cut off like Sodom and Gomorrah, were so far from being appointed to the exclusive blessings of christianity, that they were, in God's endless kindness to the world,

reserved a faithful seed of Christ, from whom the word of the Lord should sound out, and by whom the true religion should be spread through the earth, till the fulness of the Gentiles should come to its obedience, and all Israel be saved. This is St. Paul's conclusion on this very subject of the remnant in his 11th Chap. to the Romans. 2. Being chosen in Christ, and made heirs of glory, carries not the idea of the eternal exclusion of all but themselves from salvation, but from the nature of the case implies the extension of the same choice to all others, which would appear on their conversion, as it had already appeared in the conversion of the christians at Ephesus and Thessalonica. 3. The love and hatred mentioned in the case of Jacob and Esau, to say nothing of the harshness of the rendering, are not to be understood as positive but comparative love and hatred, i. e. love to both, but a greater degree of it to one than the other, or a preference among friends, for instance, for a certain office. Our Saviour uses the language of love and hate in this sense. St. Luke, xiv. 25.—“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple.” And John, xii. 25.—“He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”

Now seeing that the scriptures undeniably teach us to love our kindred, and even our enemies, and by all allowable means to preserve our lives and theirs; it cannot have been the design of Jesus to teach an opposite doctrine, but only that while we sincerely and affectionately love our relatives, we should, as disciples, love him with a still stronger and more devoted affection; and that we should strongly prefer eternal life to our temporal life in this world.

Again, the election mentioned in the case of Jacob and Esau, has no relation to their eternal state; nor does it seem to relate to them personally, but as the agents or fathers of two distinct people or nations. The matter of this election was the choice of Jehovah that Christ should be given to the Israelites and not the Edonites; and as from necessity he must select and prefer one nation to all others for this purpose, so he chose that Jesus should be brought into the world by the posterity of Jacob, and not the posterity of Esau. In all this we see nothing like positive hatred or eternal reprobation of any person or people; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to be the light and Saviour of all the nations of the earth.

We are also constrained to regard the above interpretation, or any other which can be given of those or other passages of God's word in

favour of this view of election and reprobation, as being opposed to those great and good rules of expounding scripture, which require that we should so interpret every part, passage, doctrine, and duty of the bible, as 1, That the whole shall agree and be consistent with itself. 2. That it shall be consistent with the attributes and perfections of its Divine Author. 3. That nothing therein shall be repugnant to natural reason and equity. Therefore we cannot but object to the eternal reprobation of any of the human race as being entirely opposed to the declaration, and numerous other proofs God has given that he is not willing that any should finally perish—to the numerous calls and invitations to virtue and to glory which God has graciously given to all mankind—and to the spirit of the apostolic mission to preach the gospel of salvation to every creature.

Lastly, we object to this as a scripture doctrine, because we think it calculated most unreasonably to discourage and drive, even into despair, beyond the reach of hope, the erring, weak minded, and scrupulous, who most of all need to be soothed in affliction, and encouraged to reform, and then to grow in grace daily.—Nor is this all ;—on the other hand it has a tendency to countenance the arrogant, and lift up with pride the presuming, and embolden the hardened hypocrite.

Having stated and considered the view of election which is and has ever been adopted by genuine Calvinists, and noted the reasons why we think it not to be a scriptural doctrine, we shall now further only ask your attention to what we conceive to be the genuine doctrine of election, as taught in the bible. We first meet with this doctrine in the sacred pages, in the case of Abraham, who was separated from his people and his father's, house and chosen from all the families of the earth, to be the servant and the friend of God; who called, appointed, and predestinated him to rear up and establish a house, kingdom, and priesthood, agreeably to the purpose and will of God, which should be distinguished from all other kingdoms and people, by the enjoyment of peculiar honours, titles, blessings, privileges, and the covenant of Jehovah. Here is both personal and national election—personal to Abraham, national to the Jews. Between personal and national election however, there is no difference in principle; for personal election extended to a nation, becomes national. But to what were Abraham and the Jews elected? Were they elected to eternal salvation, to the endless exclusion of all persons and nations but themselves? By no means, they were elected to receive, preserve, and transmit the genuine worship of God, till the Messiah, the true seed to whom the promises were made,

should come and dispense the same divine system of religion to the nations. Since the coming of Christ, and the calling of all nations to the service of God, and the blessings of his kingdom made by the gospel, all nations and people are and have been elected to similar duties, promises, and honours, to those before exclusively enjoyed by the Jews; so that the calling and election of the Jews, and the divine dispensations towards them, were pledges of the infinitely kind and gracious design of Deity, to extend in the fulness of time, his great salvation to all mankind, in Jesus, the true seed of Abraham. And as a demonstration of their having been originally separated from the rest of the world, by an immediate revelation from heaven—of their having enjoyed the special care of a holy Providence, and been redeemed from Egypt, and Babylon, by the hand of the Most High—and also of the certain accomplishment of all the purposes of God, relative to them and the Gentiles, as a demonstration of this we say, they have for 1800 years, though dispersed, without either civil or ecclesiastical polity, persecuted and derided by the nations for their singularity, yet they have in the face, and to the utter astonishment of the world, remained a distinct and separate people, and will no doubt continue so to be, till the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they rejected and crucified,

shall succeed in uniting both Jews and Gentiles, in one new and grand assembly of true worshippers ; and thus prove him to be the salvation of God to the ends of the earth.

Election is often in the sacred writings applied to the selection which God makes of certain persons, for certain offices and duties. In this sense, and in reference to his having been appointed to the ever blessed office of mediator between God and men, Jesus is proclaimed as the **ELECT** and **CHOSEN** of the Lord. Isa. xlii. 1. St. Mat. xii. 18. In like manner St. Paul and the other Apostles were **CHOSEN VESSELS**, to bear the riches of the gospel to all nations and kindreds of men. Acts, i. 24, xxvi, 16. And St. John, xvii. 18.—and many other places. In this way also all true christians are elected and separated from the world by their faith, principles of action, and hopes of glory ; and are called not only to enjoy, but to exemplify by their conduct, and diffuse and spread by their exertions, the excellent principles, and rich blessings of christianity, until the moral wilderness shall, beneath their genial influence, bud and blossom as the rose ; the whole earth become the garden of the Lord ; and the nations of it be brought to feel and own that christians have been emphatically the salt that preserved them, and the light that spread around them the effulgence of heavenly bliss. Certainly my

Christian hearers, this view of the bible doctrine of election implies no eternal reprobation, but proves that it is the grand purpose of God to save the whole world ; and thus it strongly supports the benevolent sentiment of the final restitution of all things. The leading principle in this doctrine of election, is this, viz :—That the peculiarly elected, are so elected for the benefit and salvation of those who are not, like themselves, specially elected.

We have now, as we hope, succeeded in finding the true meaning of ELECTION, and shown that it does not oppose, but wonderfully favours the happiness of the world ; and, therefore, seeing the mediation of Christ, the preaching and mission of the apostles, and the united influence of christians, and christian principles and examples, are all directed by the will, and aided by the spirit and power of God, in establishing the universal empire of GRACE and of GLORY, who can doubt its accomplishment, to the praise of God, and the joy of angels ?

But several voices seem to say in my ear, though we do not believe God has limited salvation by election, yet we do not believe in universal salvation, because we think salvation to be conditional : Therefore, the conditionality of salvation will be our theme the next evening.

LECTURE III.

OBJECTION II.



HEBREWS XII. 14.

FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN, AND HOLINESS, WITHOUT
WHICH NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD.

HOWEVER some men of proud and selfish feelings may spurn the idea, there is no true christian, could he be perfectly convinced the whole intelligent creation of God would be made eternally happy, consistently with the divine perfections and the rights of human agency, that would not rejoice with joy unutterable at such a conquest over sin and death, such a triumph of the Redeemer's grace, and such a glorious display of infinite goodness, wisdom, and power ; and that would not most cor-

dially join the song of angels in acclamations of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men." But there are many who suppose that by the gospel, salvation is truly and freely offered to all, upon such conditions as they can readily accept or reject as they please; and that during what they term the day of probation, many will continue wilfully to reject the terms of grace, and so by their own sinful neglect, come forever short of the great salvation set before us in Jesus Christ.

This objection being made to our religious belief, not only by many persons, but by many of profound learning in theology, and of distinguished piety and usefulness in the church of God, we shall now investigate its merits with a care becoming its importance, and he that hath ears to hear let him hear.

The doctrine of the objection is asserted to have in its favour the most clear and unequivocal authority of both reason and scripture.

It is claimed to be perfectly reasonable, that the Deity should bestow salvation on his creatures by such conditions only as will perfectly secure his own glory, and as will promote and secure the obedience and perpetual happiness of all the subjects of his kingdom; and such the conditions of salvation are averred to be, as will more fully appear by reference to the

scriptures on the subject. The objector asserts, that the substance of his objection is very forcibly expressed in the text at the head of this discourse, where complete salvation is impliedly offered to the sinner's acceptance, i. e. the blissful visions of God's presence and glory, are presented to our most enraptured imagination, but not without conditions, which are these: perfect holiness of heart and life. What can be plainer than that no one can ever see and enjoy God in his heavenly kingdom, except he first follow after holiness, and obtain it; which irresistibly proves that holiness is the only condition on which God can accept and save the sinner.

The evangelical prophet Isaiah expresses the same sentiments in the most beautiful and familiar language, saying, "The willing and the obedient shall eat the good of the land"—which places it beyond controversy that the disobedient and the obdurate shall never enter into the rest, nor taste the riches of that heavenly and better country sought by the righteous. And Jesus subscribes to the same opinion, when he says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." If the impure in heart could have seen him also, would Jesus have thus spoken? Also, when St. John saw the most sublimated visions of the new heavens, and the new earth, and of the city of Jehovah, with

those that shared its freedom, he exclaimed, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Not only these places, but much of the scriptures of both the old and new testament are supposed to establish the truth of the objection as clearly as the light of day shows us the objects that lie before us. But they also believe and affirm, that both Solomon, the wisest of the kings of Israel, and Jesus the Lord of the holy prophets, taught that the probation, or time, and only time, when these conditions could ever be accepted, is our day of life in this present world.

Solomon exhorted the people of his time in such language as may with great profit, be oft repeated in our ears, i. e. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." And Jesus, in the 8th chapter of John, warns the Scribes and Pharisees saying, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." These two passages, and some others, are accounted sufficient authority for believing that the day of grace is limited to the period of the present life; so that all beyond is

a night in which no work can be done, no means of grace enjoyed or improved.

The objection thus fully and fairly stated in connexion with the scriptural authority alleged in its support, very naturally divides itself into two branches: 1. The condition. 2. The day of salvation.

There are some christians who apply the doctrine of the objection to the first covenant, otherwise usually called the covenant of works, but not to the second covenant, i. e. the covenant of God's free and all-sufficient grace in Christ Jesus. But as this view offers no objection to our sentiments, we shall waive its further notice as irrelevant to the argument, and call your attention to the first branch of the objection, the conditions or terms of salvation.

The question now to be decided is this, viz. Is the salvation of the gospel conditional? The only difficulty in the way of giving a plain answer to this plain question, grows out of the different senses in which the term condition has been used by different persons. Some for instance have used it for what must necessarily make uncertain, and limit the object to which it is applied;—for what is a valuable equivalent for the benefit received, as the terms of a contract are supposed to be equal in value to the object of it; or for something to be performed in our own strength; and when performed

to give us a meritorious claim to salvation. In this sense it has been employed by mere legalists, and perhaps inadvertently by some others ; and in this sense we consider it as both unscriptural and useless. It is unscriptural, because in the sacred writings salvation is every where represented to be the effect of the free and saving grace of God in a Redeemer, and not in the least degree the production of works, or of human merit. And to have offered salvation to sinners on the terms of their giving what may in any possible way be considered an equivalent in value for it, would certainly have been offering it on such terms as could never have been accepted by any of those whom Jesus declares to be wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked ; and whom, therefore, he counsels to buy of him (i. e. without money and without price) never failing riches, and the pure and spotless robes of righteousness, that they may walk with the blessed, and dwell forever with the redeemed.

Others apply this term to faith, repentance, and other christian duties, as being the means without which no one can be saved ; giving to conditions the force and use of means only ; in which sense we are not opposed to them, though on account of the abuse to which they are liable, we much prefer the word means. Because the means of salvation being appoint-

ed by infinite wisdom, and adapted to reclaim the world from sin, are so far from limiting salvation, or even rendering it uncertain, that they are the method by which God has made it certain in the counsels of his goodness, and by which, in his own time, he will accomplish to his own everlasting praise, and the greatest possible good of the universe.

Before we proceed to show that the means of grace are sufficient to effect their most glorious end, the salvation of the world, we shall notice the other branch of the objection, viz. that all conditions or means of grace are limited to this life. That some of the means of grace are peculiar to this life we admit; but that all of them are, we see no cause to believe, but have many reasons for the opposite opinion.—So long and so deeply has this opinion been rooted in the minds of the greater part of christendom, that to oppose it, or call its truth in question, will probably be deemed by many a species of profanity. But our object is truth, regardless of all such considerations, though it be found with the few, and be contemned by the many. The great names that have supported it are fallible like other men, and the scriptures quoted above for its authority are far from being conclusive.

Solomon by bidding us to do with our might whatever our hands find to do, because there

is no work, devise, wisdom, or knowledge in the grave, had reference to the temporal works, and social duties peculiar to the present world. This passage, therefore, might be as successfully quoted to prove there will be no consciousness of being beyond (not in) the grave, as that there will be no repentance felt, virtue acquired, or pardon obtained there.

Nor does it appear from an attentive perusal, and a careful regard to the scope of what our Saviour says in the 8th of John, and the parallel places, that he designed to teach the Jews that after death there would be no possible method for their salvation; but he seems rather to warn them that his peculiar mission to them as his own people, would soon close; that through the stubbornness of their unbelief they would reject him, but after the Romans should besiege their city, and the woes denounced against them should threaten, they would then in vain seek deliverance by the appearance, not of himself, but of some false Messiah, and thus die in their sins; and the opportunity they then enjoyed of entering in with Christ into his kingdom on earth, and of so following him to glory as the first fruits of grace would be lost by them forever.

Had it been [our] Saviour's purpose by the words, "whither I go ye cannot come," to proclaim the endless separation of the rulers and

people of Israel from his heavenly kingdom, we cannot think he would have addressed the same language to his own disciples, saying, "As I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say unto you." John xiii. 33.

Again, St. Paul, who certainly knew the mind of Christ, says of these very Jews, who were broken off for their unbelief, God is able to graft them in again, and the receiving of them shall be life from the dead; and so all Israel be saved. And to this agree the words of Jesus in another place, John xii. 32. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

The spirit of what our Lord says on this subject seems to us to be this, viz. no unbeliever, as such, can come to Christ either in the kingdom of his grace, or that of his glory; that those who continued in unbelief and die in sin, as all do who die in unbelief, will continue to have the same inability they had while living; and here he leaves the matter, but without the least indication that natural death, which is wholly a physical change, will make any moral or spiritual change in the condition of men, either for or against them.

And if, as St. Peter assures us was the case, the gospel was preached after the death of Christ to those who lived and died in sin in the days of Noah, that they might be judged

according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit; why should we count it strange that those who died in sin at Jerusalem should have extended to them equal means of final salvation?

The limitation of all means and methods of grace to the narrow span of this life, not only fails of a fair scripture support, but it is opposed to reason and equity; for if all means are limited to this world, there is a vast and glaring disproportion and partiality in their bestowment; some enjoying the clear day, and others sitting in the cold regions of night.

Think what vast numbers of the heathen have lived and passed off the stage of life, without ever hearing so much as the name of Jesus;—think how many infants die even before they are able to lisp the mercy of Christ;—and how many there have been, and are, to whom nature has been so sparing in her gifts that their responsibility is a problem beyond our reach.

Shall we at once turn all these to destruction without even the possibility of escape?

How much more reasonable is it for us to believe that Christ, who is Lord both of the dead and living, will continue to use with all his creatures, in all conditions, the most appropriate means for their reformation, till all shall

be subdued to him, and he resign his kingdom perfect to the Father.

With both branches of this objection we have now done; and shall close the lecture by showing the strong probability there is of the truth of universal salvation from the fulness and efficiency of the means God has appointed for that end.

Certainly if conditions have only the use of means, no one could object to them; but as in that case nothing but means would be intended, it would clearly be more simple, as well as more analogous to nature, to use the latter. The universe is a vast assemblage of means and ends. God employs means for the display of his own perfections; and by them carries on the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace. Think of the vast number of means which must be employed by the Creator to effect the next eclipse of the sun, and with what minute exactness they must each operate to the same end. How countless are the means employed in the changes and government of the seasons, and the alterations of day and night.

When the Lord marked Jerusalem, Nineveh, or the old world, for destruction, no means to effect those astonishing events were wanting; nor when he would redeem his people from bondage in Egypt, or from captivity in Baby-

lon. But while these events were accomplished by the most perfect cooperation of such extended assemblages of instruments, others, perhaps, of no less importance, were apparently accomplished by single, or at least, a much more limited number. Thus, when in later times he would favour the world with a most wonderful improvement in the science of astronomy, he sent a Newton to measure the spheres, number the stars, and note their movements—and it was done. And when in his good pleasure he would give independence to the favoured descendants of the pilgrims, he gave a Washington to their armies; an Adams, a Jefferson, and a Franklin to their counsel; and a rich inheritance was theirs.

But when God would exhibit the glories of redemption, he sent his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of the world; and a glory above the brightness of the sun in the firmament beamed along the shores of death.

Jesus, also, in the amazing and benignant transactions of his mission on earth, honoured and employed means, simple means, in their accomplishment. The apostles, and faithful followers of christianity, by the gentle, yet powerful and heavenly methods appointed by their master, in a few years, and against a most powerful and cruel opposition, established and triumphantly spread the gospel through many

nations of the earth ; so that for it now to become the universal religion of the world within two centuries to come, would not be more surprising than that it spread as far as it did in the three first. Such an event is believed by most christians, and is very susceptible of proof by the scriptures. Consider how many and how powerful must be the means that shall unite the Jews and the Gentiles in faith, in friendship, and in good works ; and yet the bible asserts, with peculiar force, that this shall be done.

Now if there be means of grace sufficient to fill the earth with a millenium glory ; unite all nations in Christ, and perfect them in holiness, that they may see God and live forever ; why should it be thought more difficult for the Deity to bring those of every age to see and enjoy his heavenly kingdom, than to bring all of a particular age ? seeing the dead also are his, and when he will he can restore them to life, to holiness, and heaven. To conclude, if the united means of grace and power in the hands of Jesus be sufficient for the salvation of the world, as we think is, very apparent from the consideration of their spirituality, variety, and efficiency when directed as they are by infinite wisdom, then it follows, that the method God has chosen by which to impart salvation to his creatures, can never limit, or make it uncer-

tain to any, but must tend to spread and perfect it, till heaven and earth shall be full of its praise.

I cannot close without remarking, that it would be a most gross abuse of this doctrine for any one to say, or attempt to argue, that because God has appointed sufficient means for the restoration of all men to purity and happiness, and because those means will, in the hands of moral agents, prove successful during the reign of the Messiah ; therefore, there is no need of our using them, and so we may with impunity neglect our moral, social, or religious duties, under the pretence that our salvation is sure. We know that it is the perfection of the gospel salvation that it is sure, but it is no more sure than are the means used by Christ to procure it, and also those to be used by us for its attainment. While we neglect or refuse to use them, we can never expect to be happy in ourselves, or good examplers to others ; for none but enthusiasts and immoral characters ever refuse to improve the means recommended by the gospel. On the other hand, what an encouragement does this sentiment give to every reasonable and good man, to try in good earnest to hear the gospel, read the scriptures, meditate on heavenly things, watch his heart, seek christian conversation, and also to hold communion with heaven by prayer

and praise ; knowing that by this method he shall promote his best interest on earth, and be ripening for glory ; and though but an humble servant, he will also be a coworker together with Christ the Lord, who by the light of his word, the blessed influence of his spirit, and the power of the resurrection, will happily succeed in bringing the world to see God, and enjoy him forever.

It may be said by some, though there can be no decree or condition shown to limit salvation, yet if God has declared that some shall suffer eternal misery, then of necessity all cannot be saved. In the next lecture, therefore, we shall, if God permit, respectfully, but fearlessly, examine the objection of endless misery.

LECTURE
ON THE
DURATION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.



GENESIS XVIII. 25.

SHALL NOT THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH DO RIGHT?

THE question to be considered this evening, is not whether there will be endless, or no future punishment? nor whether future punishment will terminate in annihilation, or be extended without end?—but this is the question, whether future punishment will be endless, or limited in degree and duration, according to the character of the impenitent, and so result in their restoration to happiness? This is a 'momentous question—one of the most intense interest to the character of God and religion—one, which has engaged the gravest attention of the wisest and best of men, in ancient

and modern times—and one, which has justly claimed and received the profoundest investigation; for upon its answer depends an eternity of joy or of grief, for myriads of the human race. This is not, properly speaking, a sectarian question, but one in which we are all deeply concerned; and therefore it merits the most serious treatment, and our most prayerful consideration.

Punishment, either limited or unlimited, presupposes the existence of a Ruler; of laws, and of subjects, who are capable of knowing the laws, and doing the will of the ruler. Therefore to judge of the punishment, we must be acquainted with the character of the Lawgiver, the nature of the laws, and the capacity and circumstances of the subjects.

The character of God, as seen in his works, is most glorious. The creation around us is a mirror in which we behold “his eternal power and Godhead.” The lofty mountain, the extended plain, the starry heavens and the mighty deep, give but a faint idea of his immensity; the movements of the heavenly bodies, the revolutions of the earth, and the change of the seasons, all preserving such perfect order, and resulting in the production of so much good to the universe, are but faint illustrations of his wisdom; and the cheering influences of the sun, the salubrity of the air, and the productions of the earth and sea,

sustaining and blessing such countless myriads of various beings, are but the smallest proofs of his goodness. But when we think of the power that gave being to the universe, and the discernment that reads the heart, and sees the end from the beginning ; the mind, overwhelmed with reverence and wonder, unites with the sacred writers, in ascribing to him the attributes of eternity, omnipotence, and infinity, and also, the perfections of knowledge, wisdom, and goodness. His natural relations to man are those of Creator, Benefactor, and Judge ; and thus far at least, he is the same to every human creature, and they are the same to him ; for having created them all of "one blood," he can be "no respecter of persons." And hence, *as the Judge of all the earth, he cannot but do right.*

The law, by which we are to regulate our conduct, as the subjects of this Supreme Ruler, is revelation, without which we should never have been able to merit from him either praise or blame ; for nature and the works of God, unassisted by the light of revelation, could never have taught us the divine will in regard to our relative duties to each other, or the worship to be offered to him, much less could it have furnished those powerful motives to obedience, drawn from a future state.

The chief designs of revelation are the glory of God, and the good of men ; and its principal top-

ics, the display of the divine perfections, the declaration of the divine will, and the discovery of the motives to its performance.

Its doctrines in reference to Deity, to the origin and destiny of human nature, to the present and future state, together with the method of preparation for an advancement to eternal life, are most rational, pure, holy and sublime. Its precepts are most benevolent, just, and suited to procure for their author the greatest praise, and for men the greatest personal and social happiness. The promised rewards to faith and virtue, being according to our honest designs and real good works, are happily calculated to advance us by degrees in the attainment of perfection; and the threatenings to unbelief and vice, being also proportioned to our voluntary assent to their influence, and being emendatory in their design, must have a constantly increasing tendency to banish such feelings and habits from human society. And thus it is the manifest design and tendency of God's holy government in all its administrations, to produce righteousness in the hearts and lives of men.

To be subjects of such a government, founded on principle and extended by moral suasion, men must be moral and free agents, i. e. they must be capable of understanding the general scope of revelation, the practical influence of its doctrines

and precepts, and of feeling a conscious obligation and ability to perform them. The sacred scriptures therefore must be virtually their own expositor to every man who searches them prayerfully ; and he who does thus search them, must know what the Lord doth require of him, and what it is right for him to do or not to do ; and he must also have the power of sincerely aiming to perform what he thus knows to be right, or he can be no subject of conscious desert, and of course no subject of moral government.

With this view before us of the character of God, the general nature and design of his moral government, and of the capacity of men to learn and do his will, we may form a just idea of human accountability, and of the nature of that punishment ordained for the disobedient and the sinner. It has been a question whether the punishment of the wicked is local, that is, whether it will be produced by the place occupied by the sufferer, rather than from his character, and so be inseparable from the place ? The locality of punishment has been asserted and defended by very many persons of piety and talents, and rejected by others of equal learning and worth. Among the latter, are St. Origen and St. Augustine, and several of the Fathers ; Calvin, with many others of later times ; and by far the greater part of intelli-

gent christians of the present day. With these we concur in the opinion that hell is a state or condition of sinners in a future world, rather than a place, for the reasons that follow. First, it does not appear that any such place was created, when all things visible and invisible were made and pronounced good. Secondly, that if such a place had been created for the punishment of all sinners who die in impenitency, it would not have appeared how they could have been therein severally punished according to their respective works; as all in that case would have suffered the infliction of the same sufferings. Third, the scripture account of it, cannot well be understood otherwise than metaphorically. And fourth, because the punishment of sinners will consist, according to the scriptures, in a sense of the loss of the divine favor, loss of the pleasures of innocence; and also of conscious guilt for having abused divine goodness, and betrayed into ruin their more innocent fellow creatures.

From this course of reasoning, we arrive at the satisfactory conclusion, that although the sinner must necessarily occupy a place suited to his nature and mode of being while he suffers, yet that his sufferings will not proceed from the place, but the state of his character; and consist in a sense of shame, regret, remorse, and fear, inflicted by the righteous Judge of all, upon the awakened conscience.

There is therefore nothing in the character of the Judge, the requirements of the law, the circumstances of the agent, or the nature and tendency of the punishment, which would necessarily or naturally incline us to the belief that it will be endless ; but much that leads us to the contrary opinion. And hence, if the endless duration of hell torments can be supported, it must be by the clear and express language of revelation.

Here, let us observe, that such is the importance of the doctrine, such the awful consequences of unceasing woe, that if it were contained at all in the sacred scriptures, we should expect to find it expressed in the most unequivocal terms, and those repeated by each of the sacred writers, and in every book, if not in every chapter of the bible, and to see it holding a most conspicuous place in every creed and summary of christian faith, drawn up by the primitive and early followers of Christ.

And yet, judging from the habit of some modern preachers, we shall upon examination be surprised to find how sparing the sacred penmen have been in the use of such phrases in connexion with punishment, as have been supposed to mean endless ; for instance, the words everlasting and eternal, which are by no means the strongest terms to express duration, they could have chosen. These words occur only twice in relation to sufferings, in all the old testament. They are employ-

ed but three times by St. Matt. and only once in the gospel of St. Mark. They are sought for in vain in the gospel of St. Luke, and in all the accounts given by him of the early preaching of the apostles, in the book of Acts. St. John neither uses them in his gospel or his epistles; and everlasting occurs but once in all the writings of St. Paul, which make so considerable a part of the new testament, and then it is *everlasting destruction*, and there is no mention made of *everlasting or eternal* punishment, in the Epistle of St. James, or in those of St. Peter. Not only have most of the authors of the sacred writings wholly omitted, and the rest of them been thus sparing in the use of those terms supposed to be expressive of the proper eternity of punishment in a future state; but it is a fact worthy of notice, that the doctrine of endless sufferings is not found in any summary of christian faith, collect, or creed, drawn up by christians in the early ages of the church. The Apostles creed, for instance, does not enjoin the belief of, or require the assent of christians to the sentiment. Now, if as some suppose, the belief of this doctrine be so essential to the christian character, that he who rejects it cannot be a christian; how are we to account for its entire omission in this confessedly ancient and short summary of the fundamental articles of the christian faith, adopted by those who were best ac-

quainted with genuine and primitive christianity?

Nor is this all ; the opposite doctrine of the *Universal Restoration*, advocated by many of the fathers, was never censured by any act of the Christian Church until the close of the 4th century, and never rejected, till the meeting of the fifth general council, by whom it was for the first time, with some other sentiments, anathematized as a damnable heresy, and that rather on account of the sentiments associated with it, than for its own sake. These circumstances and facts connected with the history and character of future punishment, are mentioned, not as containing positive proof of the falsity of endless sufferings ; but as throwing light on the general subject of our present inquiry, and making it certain that the doctrine of a limited punishment to be succeeded by an universal restoration, was advocated by many, and tolerated by the whole body of christians for a long time, and that, while the Church was the most pure. And if this sentiment, as we suppose, was believed by the apostles, and therefore they used the term everlasting and eternal in a limited sense, then we are not to wonder that these terms were entirely omitted by some, and used so seldom by others ; for in that case, they would use them as being perfectly synonymous with all those modes and forms of expression frequently used by each and every one of them, to enforce a sense of

human accountability, and an apprehension of being judged according to the deeds done in the body. And hence, these words in the cases above alluded to, mean no more than that every man must give an account of himself to God, and be rewarded according to his works; a doctrine taught with equal force and clearness by our Lord, his apostles, and the holy prophets, who have also spoken of the "restitution of all things," and all in perfect consistency.

Waving further remarks, having noticed the question of the locality of punishment, let us now give our attention to the more important inquiry of its duration, and consider the grounds urged by those who advocate its strict eternity. The principal grounds relied upon for its support, are three, the scriptures, justice, and reason. We come to this work with perfect respect for the sincerity, piety, and learning, of those from whose views we freely use the liberty of dissenting, in the charitable exercise of the christian rights of private judgment.

As a fair specimen of the scriptural authority for the sentiment, take the following; Isa. 66: 24. St. Mark 9: 43, 44. "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." "And if thy

hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

The prophet in describing the future and complete triumph of the true worship of God, the entire overthrow of idolatry, and the punishment of idolators; represents the worshippers of idols in Israel and elsewhere, after their defeat and the total loss of their cause, as being thrown into the valley of Hinnom, a place on the east of Jerusalem, rendered extremely odious to the Jews by its being once the seat of the idol Moloch, where the abhorrent, cruel, and impious spectacle, of innocent children passing through the fire for his pleasure and in sacrifice to him, was for a long time to be seen; and there too these impious Israelites, idolators, and monsters of cruelty, are to be looked upon as being consumed by the worm that never shall die, and tormented by the fire that never shall be quenched. And our Lord forewarned his followers that it would be better for them to deny themselves the enjoyment of advantages, gains and pleasures, dear to them as a right hand, eye, or foot, provided they led them to offend against the gospel, than to enjoy them here, and thereby bring upon themselves the punishment of a future state, expressed by the lively and strong metaphors of

the fire, and worm, used by the prophet. For the better understanding of these metaphors, let it be remarked that the valley of Hinnom was subsequently to the days of the prophet, and in the times of our Saviour, used as a place of punishment in which men were burnt alive, or cast there to be consumed by worms ; and that the worm and the fire are the two agents, by whom the bodies of those men are consumed. Both are therefore used by Christ and the prophet as figurative expressions to denote the punishment of the wicked in a future state. By the repeated assertion that the worm shall not die, we learn that it will not be interrupted in the consumption of the body on which it preys, until it hath completed its work. The fire is unquenchable by those who are cast into it, and shall not be extinguished by any other ; and hence it will certainly accomplish the object for which it was kindled.

Those who understand these metaphors in any other light than this, seem not to have examined this subject, for in the valley of Hinnom the worm died when its food failed, and the pile on which human sacrifices were burnt to Moloch was often extinguished. *Newcome.*

That the phrase *unquenchable fire*, upon which so much stress is always laid in the argument for endless misery, does not, in its scripture use, denote a fire which shall never cease, is most certain,

as will appear by reference to the following passages. Lev. 6, 13. Isa. 34, 9—11. Jer. 17, 27. and Ezek. 20, 45—48; and others. Wherein Jehovah declares the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall *never go out*; that he will kindle a fire in Jerusalem, which *shall never be quenched*; that every green tree and every dry tree in the beautiful forests of the south shall be consumed, and *the flaming flame shall not be quenched*; and that the streams of Bozrah shall be turned into pitch, and its dust into brimstone, and the land thereof become burning pitch; and it shall not be quenched night nor day. Now although the fire was never permitted to go out upon the altar of God, while that altar stood; yet with the overthrow of the altar, the fire ceased. And notwithstanding the devoted inhabitants of Jerusalem could not quench the fire that consumed their Temple, city, and adjacent country, and therefore by them the fire was unquenchable, yet having accomplished the destruction of these objects of their solicitude, it has ages since been extinct.

Hence, the metaphorical representations of future punishment derived from Gehenna, contains no proofs of the unceasing duration of that punishment, nor does the connexion or scope of the passages before us, from our Lord or his prophet, require us so to understand them.

The next authority which we propose to consider, is the oft repeated assertion of our Saviour, St. Matt. 25, 46. 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' The strength of the argument from this passage, if indeed there be any strength in it, is drawn from the meaning of the term everlasting, assumed to be that of endless ; and its application to the happiness of the righteous as well as to the misery of the wicked, and that in the same passage, by way of an antithesis.

This term, together with those of eternal, forever, and forever and ever, are confessed to be of the same meaning, and to be translated from words of the same stock, in the Hebrew of the old, and the Greek of the new testament. What that meaning is, has occasioned much inquiry and discussion, which have resulted in the concession that in the scriptures they are sometimes applied to things of interminable perpetuity, and sometimes to things which endure for a long time, for an indefinite period, which is all we ask. This concession has been made by the ablest writers, who are at the same time advocates for the infinite perpetuity of punishment, and therefore would never have yielded this ground, but from the force of the clearest conviction. Dr. Adam Clarke, and the late President Edwards, in their writings, agree with professor Stuart, that these terms denote a limited

period when applied, as they often are by the sacred writers, "to the Jewish Priesthood ; to the Mosaic ordinances ; to the possession of the land of Canaan ; to the hills and mountains ; to the earth ; to the time of service to be rendered by a slave ; and to many other things of a like nature."

Let it not be supposed that we advocate the limited or finite meaning of everlasting, chiefly on account of its favorable influence upon the doctrine of the restoration ; for if it were not understood thus, it would be impossible to reconcile the old and new testament together, and to harmonise the scriptures. If the *everlasting priesthood* of Aaron had been endless ; it could never have been succeeded by the priesthood of Christ, which was after the order of Melchisedeck. If the *everlasting ordinances* of the law had been of unceasing perpetuity and force, they could never have given place to the more simple and spiritual institutions of the Gospel ; nor if *everlasting punishment* be endless, can it ever be followed by the "restitution of all things" as promised by the holy prophets.

Now if as thus admitted, and for such good reasons, the term everlasting be sometimes used to denote a limited period ; then it can never in any case, of itself, prove any thing to which it is applied to be interminable, and therefore it does not prove the punishment of the wicked to be such. To make this clear, let us take the excel-

lent rule given by the Editor of Brown's Dictionary of the Bible, for understanding the words eternal, everlasting, and forever. "These words must be understood according to the nature of the subject concerning which they are used, and according to the connection of the places in which they occur." By this rule it appears that we are never to admit everlasting as meaning endless, except the subject concerning which it is used, be known to be endless in its own nature, or proved to be so, by something else. Now punishment is not endless in its own nature ; therefore everlasting, applied to it in the text, does not prove it to have that meaning.

To prove that the punishment in the text, is not in its nature endless, let it be noted that the word rendered punishment signifies chastisement, or correction, such as parents use with their children, hence it tends to exhaust the source from whence it springs, and aids the restoration of the sufferer, and hence the passage before us, awful as it sounds to the ear, is rather a proof of the hypothesis of the universal restoration, than of the opposite sentiment.

Again it has been urged in favor of the perpetuity of punishment, that it is placed over against the happiness of the righteous antithetically, and that the duration of the happiness of the one, and the punishment of the other, are expressed by the

same term ; and therefore that if everlasting means endless in one case, it means equally so in the other. To this it may be answered, that it appeared to be rather the object of our Lord to present to the view a contrast of the general subjects of happiness and misery, than to prove their equal duration ; and therefore he employed an indefinite term to denote their continuance, leaving us to form such opinions of the duration of the one and the other, as the Scriptures authorise us to entertain.

When we consider to how many different subjects the word everlasting is applied in the sacred volume, and how many different and at the same time indefinite periods of time it is employed to denote ; we certainly shall not think it strange that Christ applied it to the misery of the wicked, and to the happiness of the righteous. Nor can I see the least reason or necessity for supposing it to have the same meaning in the two cases. The subjects with which it is connected differ in every other respect, and why should we think them of the same duration ? Again, the word everlasting does not govern the character of the subject to which it is applied, but the character of the subject governs its meaning, as so applied.

If for instance, forever be applied to the existence of God, it means without beginning and without end, because he is without beginning of days

or end of life ; but if the same word be applied to the time a Jewish servant was required to serve his master, it means merely as long as he should live. How very different are the meanings of this same word in these two cases ; and from what does that difference arise ? Answer, from the great difference between the subjects of its application, the Deity and the slave. What can be more different than are happiness and misery ? The one originates with God, the other in the sinfulness of men ; why then should they be alike enduring, seeing God delights in the one, but takes no pleasure in the other ? It will avail nothing to say that everlasting is connected with future happiness and misery, and that in the same verse ; and therefore it must mean as long in the one as the other case.

There is a similar case of the same word being applied twice in the same sentence to different things, and having two very different imports. Hab. 3. 6 : "And the everlasting mountains were scattered, and the perpetual hills did bow ; his ways are everlasting !" yet who from seeing in this passage that everlasting is in the same sentence applied to the mountains and to the ways of God, could reasonably conclude that the ways of God and the mountains will be of the same duration, when the one must from the very nature of the case continue strictly to eternity, and the oth-

er can stand only for a limited time, being destined to be *brought low*?

We come then to this conclusion, that the wicked shall be punished according to their deserts, and the righteous rewarded according to the laws of Christ's kingdom ; and that there is nothing in the nature or circumstances of the case, which requires us to attach to the term everlasting, as applied to punishment in St. Matt. 25, 46, the idea of endless. Should it be thought that by this conclusion we leave the happiness of the righteous without sufficient proofs of its endless continuance ; as from the above reasoning some persons may choose to say that future happiness is not in its nature interminable, and therefore everlasting when applied to it does not mean endless, and this being the strongest proof of its durability, it may come to an end as well as misery,—to this it may be replied, that the most conclusive proofs of the eternity of future happiness, are not found in the application of everlasting or any other term, used in the scriptures to express the duration of punishment ; and for two reasons, first because there are stronger terms used in connection with happiness, than are found connected with misery, and second, because other circumstances show it to be endless.

1. God declares that the righteous shall not be confounded *world without end* ; that the saints have in heaven an *inheritance incorruptible* ; that

they *cannot die any more* ; for they are equal unto the angels ; and that they shall have a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. See Isa. 45, 17.—1. Pet. 1, 4.—St. Luke 20, 36.—2. Cor. 4, 17. Where in all the bible is it said of the misery of the wicked, that it shall be *endless*, or continue *world without end*, or that the weight thereof is far exceeding *eternal*, as it is here affirmed of the happiness of the redeemed ? But second, we depend not so much on these and many other equally strong expressions and forms of speech, made use of to denote the permanency of the saints' felicity, (but are never applied to misery) as we do upon their union to Christ ; so that while he lives, they shall continue in happy life ; for Christ is made Priest by the power of an endless life, and he says to his disciples, because I live ye shall live also ; therefore when we see him we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And again, their happiness and life in heaven flows from the infinite source of goodness as its fountain, and hence it can never cease ; but this can never be said of misery and death.

Our Lord's remark concerning Judas, the unhappy man who betrayed him, St. Matt. 26, 24 ; 'it had been good for that man if he had not been born,' has been supposed to furnish an argument for the endless misery of the wicked.

To this it is sufficient to reply, that this language of Christ is proverbial ; and that such a tremen-

dous doctrine cannot be supposed to be founded on the solitary use of a Jewish proverb. The import of this saying seems to be this, that his punishment would be more than a balance for all the blessings of this life, so that he would have been a gainer, by passing immediately from his birth to his grave; for, to suppose that our Lord intended by it, to say that if God had been good to him he would not have conferred upon him his existence, (the only view which can favor the doctrine of his eternal perdition) would be an impeachment of the Divine goodness.

Another passage which has been much relied upon as a proof of the doctrine under consideration, is that found in 2 Thes. 1: 9. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." That we may learn what St. Paul intended by these words, let us consider that they and their connection were addressed to the church at Thessalonica, while under a grievous persecution from those who believed not the gospel. The principal object of the whole passage was to encourage and comfort the "brethren" under all their "tribulations," first, by assuring them that they should be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God for which they were suffering such tribulation, and therein should find rest with the apostles and others who remained faithful to the end. Second,

by assuring them that it would be *a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation* to their persecutors, at the time when the Lord Jesus should be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, (the symbol of Divine Glory) with his mighty angels, to give rest to, and to be glorified in all them that believe, and also to punish with everlasting destruction them that obey not the gospel.

From this general view of the scope of the passage, it appears (1,) that this destruction is future, and will take place at the time when Christ shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom; (2,) that the destruction does not signify annihilation, as some have supposed, for it is called "tribulation" by the apostle, see verse 6th; (3,) that it will be a righteous recompense for the trouble they have given to the saints. There is nothing therefore in the nature of the case which requires the punishment to be endless, but on the contrary, as the "trouble" they had given was limited, so it would rather seem that in reason and justice, their "trouble" in return, to the righteous, should also be limited. But not to insist on this, we would farther say, the argument from the term *everlasting* in this text, has already been fully answered; and close our observations on this class of scripture proofs with the single remark, that everlasting does not naturally and necessarily imply that the punishment to

which it is applied will be endless, nor do the words destruction, punishment, or fire, or any two of them united, imply the doctrine.

We come next to notice those passages in the New Testament, where our Saviour speaks of the wicked under the metaphors of a *tree* "hewn down and cast into the fire," of *chaff* burnt up "with unquenchable fire," of *bad fish*, taken in the net only to be "cast away," and of *foolish virgins*, against whom the door of mercy is shut. These Scriptures have been much employed in support of the irrecoverable loss of the wicked; and the challenge has been made with much assurance, "when the *fruitless tree* is burnt up, who shall restore it again! when the *chaff* is burnt up with unquenchable fire, who will be able to restore it!" and so, also, of the *bad*, cast from the gospel net, and of the *foolish virgins* against whom the door of grace is closed. The whole force of the seeming argument from these passages, arises from the literal meaning of these figures of speech, and the natural impossibility there is of restoring the tree or chaff to their former state, when once they are burnt; but not at all from their metaphorical use, for there is no such impossibility with God, to restore sinners after having punished them. This will appear, and the whole argument be conclusively answered, if we refer to St. Paul's language and argument found in the eleventh chapter to the

Romans; where he speaks of the unbelieving Israelites under the metaphor of branches broken off and rejected. Now nothing can be more obvious than it is, that the very characters here styled *branches* by St. Paul, are by our Lord called trees, chaff, &c. and as he affirms, *God is able to, and will graft them again into their own olive tree, and that the receiving of them shall be life from the dead, and so all Israel be saved*; therefore we cannot understand our Saviour in the above passages as teaching the impossibility of the restoration of the very same characters, whom St. Paul says shall be saved.

Another ground of defence for the endless torment of the wicked, is divine justice. Those who assume this ground, reason thus: "because sin is infinite in respect to the object against which it is committed, therefore it deserves an infinite punishment." But to this it is replied, that if for this reason all sins are infinite as to their demerit, then the demerit of all sins must be equal, and so there must be equal reason for the pardon of all sins; for the demerit of no sin can be more than infinite. And besides this, it from hence follows, that God cannot *render to every man according as his works shall be*; because, although they commit innumerable sins; he can only punish them for one; as they cannot receive a punishment which is more than infinite. The great error in this ar-

gument consists in the supposition that sin is infinite, which is absurd ; because it is the act of a finite creature ; and therefore can be no more than a finite act, whatever may be the aggravation of its circumstances. Hence, the conclusion is irresistible, that as sin is limited, being the act of an agent of limited powers ; neither reason nor justice can require an unlimited or endless punishment, as such punishment would not be *according to his works*.

The last source of its defence which we shall mention, is that of reason. It is said to be reasonable that we should be punished according to our departures from the line of duty here, and therefore it will be equally so that we should continue to be punished by the same rule so long as we shall continue to be sinners, which will be always ; and hence our sufferings must be perpetual and without end. To this we answer, that we do not admit several things here taken for granted : first, that men will continue to sin time without end ; second, that there will be no means of grace, or space for repentance beyond the present life ; and third, that the only design of punishment is to satisfy the demands of divine justice, and of course never to be employed as an instrument or auxiliary of the sinner's reformation. Could these things be shown, the inference of endless misery would follow ; but those scriptures which speak of Christ

as taking *away the sin of the world*, and being *the propitiation for the sins of the whole world*, plainly forbid the idea of its endless continuity; and the numerous passages which declare that the severest judgments of God shall result in the sinner's knowing and confessing the Most High, and those which place all punishment under the gracious government of the Mediator, who will subdue all beings and powers to himself, and subsequently resign his kingdom to the Father in perfect subjection to his holy and blessed will; * clearly prove the fallacy of limiting the work of grace to the present life, or of asserting that the only design of punishment is the satisfaction of justice; and hence the argument built on these premises necessarily falls to the ground, and reason, as alleged, is not for, but against the doctrine that misery will have no end. Not only this, but the places above referred to, with many others which might be quoted had we time, strongly imply the emendatory character and design of punishment, and this is farther strengthened by the universal admission that the retributions of God are in many cases salutary, and if as the Scriptures assure us, there is no respect of persons with him, then they must prove so in all cases; and if the punishment be salutary, then under its continuance men must finally cease to commit sin, and conse-

* 2 Cor. 5, 10. Rev. 14, 10. 1 Cor. 15, 24—28.

quently cease to be punished. Now from this examination of the doctrine of punishment, we come very naturally to the conclusion that the punishments denounced in the sacred writings against sinners, are not endless, and therefore not opposed to the doctrine of the final and universal restoration, but rather in favor of that most desirable and glorious hypothesis.

Having thus answered this most important objection, but whether satisfactorily or not, the hearer is left to decide; we will now close with a short reference to the reasons for believing that future punishment is limited in degree and duration, by the number and aggravations of the crimes for which it is inflicted.

We believe it to be thus limited, because it harmonises much better with the infinite love and goodness of God, as revealed in the gospel and attested by the Holy Spirit within us; because it accords much more perfectly with the general scope and design of the gospel of Christ, and the numerous means which it employs for the salvation of the world: because it is perfectly consistent with that justice which lies at the foundation of divine government, prescribing equal laws, and securing the rights of God, and the rights of mankind: because it is the only view of punishment, which can render it salutary to men, and conducive to the willing subjection of all minds to the will of God; and

lastly, because it harmonises with all the attributes of Deity, the promised triumph of Christ over sin and death, and will issue in the ascriptions of glory and praise to the righteous *Judge of all the earth*, by the happy millions of the human race.

My friends, being fully impressed with a sense of how deeply the great question of this evening's discussion concerns the Divine Character, the reputation of the early christians and martyrs, the success and prevalence of the holy scriptures and of genuine christianity;—of the deep interest you feel for yourselves and fellow creatures in this great subject; and for myself being perfectly convinced that neither the Bible, the justice of God, or the dictates of enlightened reason, sustain the doctrine of the endless perpetuity of sufferings for any of the human family, but that they perfectly accord in giving their united authority to the support of a future limited, emendatory, and righteous judgment of God, which will result in the bowing of every knee to God, and the confession of every tongue to Christ; I therefore submit this whole subject, with what has been said upon it, to your best feelings and unbiased judgment in the fear of God, for your prayerful consideration, praying that a careful search of the scriptures and the super-human light and wisdom from the Holy Spirit, may guide you to a right decision, and that decision lead you to feel more true rev-

erence for God, more filial fear of his displeasure, more sacred regard for the Holy Bible, and more genuine sympathy for mankind ; and to cherish a more ardent love to Christ, the great Restorer of the world, and a more devout faith in his religion, which *has the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.*

LECTURE V.



ANOTHER OBJECTION CONSIDERED.

TITUS II, 11, 12.

"FOR THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGETH SALVATION, HATH APPEARED TO ALL MEN, TEACHING US, THAT DENYING UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLY LUSTS, WE SHOULD LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY AND GODLY IN THIS PRESENT WORLD."

THE marginal reading of the eleventh verse is to be preferred, not on account of its being more favorable to our views, but as expressing the meaning of the apostle more clearly. The reading referred to is this : *the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared*, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. If the grace of God, exhibited in

the gospel, had in the days of the apostles appeared to all men, it must have been in some very refined and spiritual sense, seeing many had never heard of it ; but that it had then appeared to the apostles and christians of that day, and was designed to carry in its progress through the world the glad tidings of salvation to the whole human race, teaching them, as it progressed, to abandon all false religion, and to live in obedience to God, is perfectly consistent with the spirit and genius of christianity, and gives an easy and consistent view of the passage. Should any choose to abide by the authorised rendering, it will make no difference for or against the salvation of all men ; for as the grace of God bringeth salvation, in every sense in which it hath appeared to all men, salvation must have appeared to and for them.

St. Paul seems to employ in the text, a most beautiful and striking metaphor taken from the sun, which is seldom noticed. As the sun appears or shines out from the east upon the darkness that broods over the face of the earth, and commences by his diurnal rotation upon his own axis, and his revolution in his orbit, his course of *successively* imparting light and its thousand blessings to the whole creation, so the gospel of the grace of God, has shined out, and will successively enlighten, sanctify, and bless the inhabitants of every part and region of the world, and in Heaven's great

year, it will finish its course by bringing *all flesh to see the salvation of God.*

It is the leading sentiment of the passage before us, that the same grace that brings salvation to men, teaches them, and tends to produce in them, the habits of piety to God, benevolence and justice to their fellow men, and of personal sobriety and purity in the present life as a preparation for the glory and happiness of a future state, and consequently that all false religions tend, either directly or remotely, to form and strengthen opposite habits, and to disqualify men for future happiness. This sentiment is likewise supported by the general voice of Scripture. "*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,*" "*sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.*" The true faith *works by love and purifies the heart—and overcomes the world.* The christian is required to *yield his members servants to righteousness unto holiness: and called unto virtue and to glory.* By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another; for love worketh no ill to its neighbor, and is the fulfilling of the law. The good tree is known by its fruit; for the fruits of the Spirit are in all, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness and faith. While on the other hand, it is affirmed with equal truth, *in vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrine*

the commandments of men—evil communications corrupt good manners—and they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. Therefore, although we would give all due credit to the sincerity of those who are honestly in error, yet we cannot for a moment agree with those who affirm that all doctrines, whether true or false, are equally salutary in their influence upon the hearts of those who believe them, and upon the moral condition of the society in which they are promulgated. Nor do the scriptures warrant the belief that errors in sentiment have no influence, and are therefore harmless. Still less do they countenance that pretended charity, which says there are as good men—men as strongly fortified in virtue, and as thoroughly guarded against temptation, among infidels and unbelievers, as are to be found among christians. If we appeal to history, it will corroborate the prophetic testimony of the scriptures, by giving us the most satisfactory proofs that christianity has already greatly improved the political, moral, social and religious condition of mankind.

What if there were some bright stars, that shone to relieve the darkness of the long and dreary night of pagan superstition, whose light borrowed a peculiar lustre from the surrounding darkness? Is not their light perfectly eclipsed by the rising sun, whose day we live to see? But if it be inquired

why the christian character has not arisen to a much higher standard of perfection than we can as yet claim for it among professing christians? this is our answer : because christianity has, through ignorance or design, been adulterated and mixed with the errors and darkness of former times, which have served, in some degree, to neutralize its heavenly influence. And hence, one method of detecting error, is to trace its influence upon the mind that receives it, and thus to expose its licentious tendency in society. On this ground, that is, its licentious tendency, our distinguishing doctrine, the *final and universal restoration*, has been seriously objected to ; and therefore we cheerfully put it upon trial, that its guilt, or its innocence of the charge may appear, as compared with its opposing sentiment.

The vast importance of the Restoration to the hopes and the happiness of mankind, and the equal importance of the objection to it, which is now under consideration, claim for this discussion a most devout and serious attention. And that we may proceed understandingly, we shall present a concise view of the doctrine objected to, the objection to it, and then endeavor to obviate and remove the objection.

First, then, the doctrine is briefly this, viz. that God, having created the human race to do his will, and to enjoy his care and goodness, and they

having rebelled against his law, and forsaken his service to their own condemnation and ruin, was pleased in conformity to his original design to make known by the gospel, his plan of infinite grace for their salvation or *restoration*, to the service and happiness for which they were at first created, by turning them from idolatry and confirming them in the habits of practical holiness of heart and life—that for the accomplishment of this most glorious purpose of grace, he instituted the kingdom and government of the Mediator, extending from the commencement of the gospel to the resignation of said kingdom in perfect subjection, at the consummation of all things—that he has constituted all the human race the moral and accountable subjects of the government of Christ, not only while living here, but also in a future state, for all their secret thoughts, feelings and actions, wherever exercised or committed—that therefore Christ will here or hereafter, and previous to the resignation of his kingdom, reward every man according to his virtue, and punish the wicked according to their neglect of, or disobedience to that gracious gospel that bringeth them salvation, and that he will continue so to punish them, till they by a sincere and hearty repentance towards God, find peace and pardon in believing; and hence, punishment, in all cases, being not an end of Christ's government, but a mean, cannot

be endless ; for having accomplished its design, it will of necessity subside and give place to the salvation brought to light by the grace of God. From this short statement of the Restorationists' views in regard to the purposes of God, the issue of the Redeemer's reign, and of the design and character of punishment ; it will be seen that their sentiments do not subvert but establish the scripture doctrine of salvation by grace, and at the same time furnish sufficient checks to vice, and the most efficient motives to reformation and the practice of virtue *in the present world*. Second, to this however it has been objected ; and many have alleged, that these sentiments do not sufficiently guard men against the allurements of sin, and the indulgence of sinful pleasure, ambition, and revenge ; nor give to them the highest motives to self-denial, submission to Christ, and to the obedience of the gospel—that it does not sufficiently impress, alarm, and awaken the conscience of sinners, to induce their repentance, reformation, and return to God, with full purpose of heart to serve him forever ; and hence that it cannot prove to be practically *the power of God unto salvation*.

These objections are supported by too reasons, 1. because the Restoration extends the work of grace beyond the present life ; and supposes that those who leave this world impenitent and unbe-

lieving, will ultimately be subdued and reconciled to God. 2. because it presupposes punishment to be limited in degree and duration to the character of the sinner, the aggravated circumstances of his guilt, and the obduracy of his heart; and hence however long and severe it may be, it will at last come to an end and the sufferer be made happy. Therefore it is said the sinner will be encouraged to continue in his sinful course, saying to himself, if I do not repent and reform here, I shall have the opportunity of doing so hereafter; and if the punishment which I shall merit comes upon me, yet it will not be interminable and so I shall be happy after all let me do as I will. But if there were no future days of grace held up to view, and the punishment were to be represented as strictly endless, he would have no such excuses to make. Having thus clearly and fully stated the objection and the reasoning on which it is founded, we would here only remark for the present, that the abuse of any religious sentiment is not to be urged against its use; for if it be, the whole doctrine of grace must be abandoned.—

3. In our reply to this specious, and by many thought to be an unanswerable objection, we shall inquire into the motives by which men are governed in their conduct, and the influence which limited and endless punishment are respectively calculated to exert upon those motives.

The motives by which the conduct of men are governed, may be reduced to three, fear, hope, and complacency.

As far as free moral agents permit their self-determining power, their caprice, self-will, or their sense of right, to be influenced in their decisions by motives, so far they may be said to be governed by those above named. The fear we allude to, is the apprehension and dread of evil, sufferings, or punishment, which will be incurred by the perpetration of vicious actions, as the natural consequences of sin, the awards of society, or the inflictions of Deity, for the violations of his will; and whether these threatened evils, sufferings, or punishments, relate to the body, the mind, or the condition, or be apprehended in the present, or future state, they form motives or inducements to abstain from such actions. Hope is the pleasurable expectation of good, natural or spiritual, in the present or future world, to be obtained as the result of good actions, done for the benefit of men and in obedience to the will of God; and as such becomes a powerful motive or excitement to the practice of religion and virtue, from the first moment it is entertained. Complacency, is that pleasure and satisfaction which the mind of a good man experiences in performing noble and worthy actions, the keeping of a good conscience, and in doing the will of God from a conviction that it is

perfectly good and holy ; and hence it is the happiest motive which can influence the good man to persevere, and differs from hope in that it is more immediately from himself, and refers especially to the present ; whereas hope regards the future.

These motives act upon all persons in exact proportion to their intelligence, aversion to sufferings, and desire for happiness, influencing them in all the duties and transactions of life. The vicious will therefore be naturally most influenced by their fears, the virtuous by their hopes, and the perfectly good by their complacent feelings ; and hence when these motives all unite and act to one end, their influence is the most powerful, and when the last only in connexion with gratitude and assurance is sufficient, as will be the case in heaven, then the subject will be the most perfectly happy, and obedience be bliss itself.

But fear, to be salutary, must not be superstitious, that is, founded upon imaginary evils, such as have no existence in fact, such as God's word does not denounce upon sinners—it must not be slavish, a mere dread of punishment, without any consciousness of its justice, and our own deserts, for that degrades the mind and hardens the heart—it must not be excessive, without degree or measure, such fear is despair, the palsy of the soul, which prevents the possibility of reformation, and places the unhappy victim beyond the reach of hope. Nor

must hope, to be efficient, be presumptive, founded merely on our wishes ; not delusive, having no foundation in reason, fact, or the promises of God ; such for instance as the hope of sinning wilfully and escaping a just punishment, without sincere repentance and faith in Christ ; the hope of arriving at angelic perfection in the present life ; or of living our whole lives here in sin, and going immediately to glory. Such hopes, being unsupported by the scriptures, tend to encourage pride, arrogance, and a bold contempt of piety and prayer, benevolence and faith in Jesus ; and therefore instead of being motives and incentives to virtue and religion, are while they last, productive of the very opposite ; hence he that is flattered by them will be sorely disappointed, and the *staff on which he leans, shall pierce his hand*. It is then a mistake not only to suppose that *hopes* such as banish all *fear* from the sinner, are most favorable to religion ; but it is equally so, to conceive that the greatest degree of *fear*, that which banishes every ray of hope from the breast, can favor the cause of reformation and righteousness.

Fear, to be healthful, morally speaking, must be mixed with love and hope, and of consequence the punishment which excites it must be just, that is, proportioned to the sins of the sufferer, and the aggravated circumstances under which they were committed, both in degree and duration. It must

be reasonable, such as an unperverted conscience cannot but approve as right ; it must be benevolent, tending to the emendation of the sinner, such as a good father, looking to its effects, could consistently administer upon the children of his care and love ; it must be scriptural, such as is clearly supported by the general voice and spirit of revelation, that the believer may have no doubt of its truth ; it must be certain in all cases but that of genuine repentance and reformation, as in the case of the prodigal son in the gospel, and in that case it must be sure of pardon, in the name and for the sake of Jesus, who died " the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." It must be sufficient, (not to expiate guilt, for that it neither can nor was it intended ever to do,) but to subdue and humble the sinner ; and therefore it must be continued till it has produced that effect, and then cease forever, *that grace may henceforth reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

This scheme of punishment, making it just, reasonable, scriptural, certain to the impenitent, while he continues to be such, remissible only to the penitent ; and certain of accomplishing its design before it can cease, and certain to cease when the sinner is humbled, will not fail to exert a most salutary influence on the mind and conscience of the impenitent sinner, and be a most powerful

auxiliary to his repentance and reformation. It commends itself to his sense of justice, his reason and conscience, and to his own best interest ; and being sustained by the plain letter of the scriptures, it will readily command his full and undoubting belief ; and his faith thus established will excite his fear and apprehension of an evil which will far more than balance the pleasure he can promise himself by the gratification of his sinful propensities. And the fear thus founded on such clear and high authority, will affect his reason and understanding rather than his excited imagination, and cause him to dread the commission of sin rather than the hand that punishes it ; and consequently it will be neither superstitious nor slavish, but healthful and vigorous, awakening to a sense of real danger, quickening and strengthening every resolution and effort to escape by the only door of hope ; and therefore this view of punishment, and the system of doctrine and practice properly connected with it, cannot be licentious in their tendency. This is the view entertained by Restorationists, of the scripture doctrine of punishment, and its tendency upon the moral condition of mankind.

The doctrine which limits rewards and punishments to the present life, is liable to the most serious objections, as being not only unfounded in scripture, and inconsistent with reason and justice ;

but as leaving vice without a sufficient check, and virtue without an effectual support; and must therefore be licentious in its influence upon society, being neither sufficient to give energy to the moral government of Deity, or to secure the order and peace of community. And although the advocates of this sentiment arrogantly claim for it the highest character for being benevolent and emendatory, yet nothing can be more manifest to our senses and experience than it is, that in a great variety of cases it utterly fails to produce the least visible emendation of heart or life in multitudes who notwithstanding it, live and die in sin, and without the least appearance of penitence.

A still more objectionable feature necessarily connected with this doctrine is this, that rewards and punishments are not only limited to the present state, but that they are, by the Divine Counsel, limited to the natural effects or consequences of vice and virtue, in those who practice them; which amounts to a denial of the existence of rewards and punishments, in the common acception of those terms. Let this sentiment be followed up to its result, and it will repeal the penalties of all laws, human and divine; and leave vice uninterrupted and virtue unaided by the Deity or human governments, in their struggle for the mastery in society.

This modern opinion has been adverted to,

merely that the reader may see and feel the difference between that and the sentiment above stated, and the difference of their spirit and influence upon good and bad men, in the world ; for it is the chief object of this part of the lecture to compare our view of future limited punishment with that taken by those who believe it endless ; that by so doing we may the better judge of their comparative influence, and thereby show that ours is free from the just charge of being licentious.

If future punishment be without end, it must be entirely different from that which is experienced in the present life, which is confessedly emendatory in its design ; and therefore he that does not so improve it as to be made better by its administration, increases his guilt. But to suppose such a difference in the character and design of God's moral government, in the present and future states, is not supported by scripture or sound reason, as we understand them ; and hence the sentiment can have but a slender hold upon the conscience—if it be vindictive, and expressive of unalterable displeasure in God, it will naturally harden the heart, and the fear of it will be slavish and degrading to the soul, depressing the mind by degrees to unutterable despair ;—if the fear of interminable misery, unalleviated by hope or a sense of the Divine compassion, once takes possession of the mind, it will render it weak, gloomy,

and superstitious. In proof of this position, we may successfully appeal to the heathen who worship Gods, malicious and revengeful, and to many cases of persons within our own knowledge, who have unfortunately despaired of divine favor, and given themselves up to the dread apprehension of unceasing anguish, as their certain and unavoidable doom. What if it be said these are extreme cases? they are the very cases to try the principle.

Having thus stated the two schemes of limited and endless punishment, and the kinds of fear they naturally produce in the human mind; if any doubt remains as to which of them will exert the most salutary influence, let us consider what it is that renders punishment the most effectual to reform sinners, or to prevent the commission of crime. Surely it is not its endless duration; because the apprehension of sufferings far short of endless, would be sufficient to deter any one from sin. Who would purchase the momentary and sensual delights of a short and uncertain life of pleasure and dissipation, at the expense of only one thousand years of excruciating and unalleviated torments? No one; it is not in human nature so to do. Much less would he accept such pleasure upon the certain condition of suffering therefor long and uncertain periods of severe punishment, though he were certain it would afterwards come to an end, and he should be made for-

ever happy by the grace of that Saviour against whom he had sinned. Then, it is not the length but the certainty of sufferings for sin, whether limited or not, that deters men from its indulgence ; for to the very same degree in which punishment is uncertain, there is no occasion to fear : and besides, we are always prone to flatter ourselves that the chance will be in our favor, especially where the allurements are great. Now for punishment to be practically certain to us, we must sincerely believe in its truth ; for what we do not believe, is nothing to us. Which then is capable of the clearest and strongest proof ? Surely that view of punishment which is most scriptural, reasonable, just, and salutary, will most easily obtain the credence of mankind, and by them be deemed the most certain, as coming from God. The reason why men are no more restrained from sin by fear, is not because they believe in limited future punishment, but because they do not believe in any ; that therefore which will most readily commend their belief, will have the best influence when preached to them. Nor is that fear the most effectual to check vice, and at the same time to cherish and fortify virtue, which is the most intense, but that which is most properly mixed with hope ; so that while we fear a punishment sufficient to subdue and humble us at the feet of Christ, by a sense of the evil of sin, and a sincere and

heartly repentance therefor, and at the same time leaves us the hope of relief by that repentance—this, I say, is the most salutary fear.

Therefore as the gospel addresses men as being already sinners, the true secret of successful preaching is that instituted by Jesus and his apostles, of so addressing the fears by the denunciation of a just, reasonable and disciplinary punishment, as to prevent their continuance in sin, and at the same time so to encourage hope by the promise of pardon and reward, as to produce repentance and reformation. Excessive fear discourages the sinner, and hurries him to despondency ; and fallacious hope, without reformation, makes him arrogant and reckless in his course of wickedness ; but a just mixture of hope and fear, will make him the humble, yet cheerful, devoted and spiritual follower of Christ—check his propensities to evil, and strengthen his resolutions to goodness—chasten the enjoyment of worldly prosperity, and comfort and invigorate the heart in affliction and death ;—and hence, we come to the conclusion, that the doctrine of a future, just, and salutary punishment, connected with the holy doctrine of the final restoration of the whole human race, is not justly chargeable with being licentious. No man in the full belief of its truth, and acting in the presence of God, and with reference to a future impartial judgment, ever said to himself,

because my punishment will not be endless, therefore I am resolved to sin on, indulge my propensities, and knowingly subject myself to the pains of this life, and the just retribution of a future state. And not only this, but on the other hand, we are persuaded that, if properly taught and enforced, it will conduce more effectually and properly to alarm the sinner to a just sense of his condition by a strong appeal to his conscience, and also to fortify the believer, by strong and certain hope, mixed with trembling, against all the allurements of temptation, than does the less reasonable, and, as we have shown in the previous Lecture, the less scriptural doctrine of *endless misery*.

That sentiment clothes the character of God in terrors little suited to the Father of mercies and God of infinite, impartial grace; and throws around religion a saddening gloom, which ill comports with the clear shining of the true light from heaven, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world: thus rendering them repulsive to the finer and more manly feelings of the heart; for who could desire for himself or for any human being, the solemn and awful reality of endless woe?

But the restoration gives to the Father of the Universe the most glorious character for justice, mercy, and truth,—to religion the most inviting aspect, and to the human race the most reasona-

ble and irresistible motives to virtue and piety ;
- and therefore we are constrained to believe that it
will prove itself to be the power and grace of God
that bringeth salvation to all men, teaching all na-
tions and people to deny all ungodliness and
worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and
godly in this present world.

LECTURE VI.



PROOFS OF THE FINAL RESTORATION.

ISAIAH VII. 3.

"AND ONE CRIED UNTO ANOTHER, SAYING, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD OF HOSTS ; THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY."

HAVING noticed in the previous lectures, some of the principal objections frequently brought against the doctrine of "universal restoration ;" we are this evening, to commence the consideration of the arguments and proofs in its favor, and shall present first, those drawn from the Divine attributes.

To qualify his servant Isaiah for the sacred office of a prophet, it pleased Jehovah to appear to him in a vision, seated upon a throne pure and

exalted, with an heavenly train ; and when the prophet beheld, and heard the seraphim shouting the praises of his holiness, immediately the whole earth appeared to be filled with the reflected splendors of his glory. And what was the glory of the Lord ? It was the display of his goodness then about to be made by the spirit of prophecy ; for when Moses besought the Lord to show him his glory, the answer was, " I will cause all my goodness to pass before thee." And his lips being touched with a live coal from off the altar, he spake thenceforth of " the coming of the just one," and of " the glory that should follow."

By far the most wonderful exhibition of Divine goodness ever made to the world, was made in the revelation of the great plan of redemption by a Mediator ; and as when Jesus Christ, the likeness of the Father's glory, appeared to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, a choir of the heavenly hosts gave glory to God in the highest ; so when his kingdom shall prevail, and every knee shall bow to him in humble reverence, then shall the saints sing " alleluiah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ;"—and thus too, when the glorious " restitution of all things," announced by the spirit of prophecy, and confirmed by all the holy prophets since the world began, shall have been completed, then will every inhabitant of the earth, unite with saints and angels, to give glory

to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever, for the holiness, goodness, and happiness enjoyed by the Universe.

The proposition to be sustained is this, viz. that the whole human race, after being judged according to their works, will be restored to the Divine favor, by the riches of grace, through genuine faith, repentance, and the exercise of a truly christian temper and disposition of heart ; and the grounds of its support, are the character and attributes of Deity, considered in their relation to the human race.

For the sake of reasoning more clearly on this subject, let us suppose that the scriptures declare to us the being and perfections of Deity, but that they are silent as to the destiny of mankind ; in that case, being left to reason only from a knowledge of his perfections and relation to us, what would be the conclusion at which we should most naturally arrive on the subject ? For this purpose, let us now contemplate the being, perfections, and relation of God to man.

In reference to God I would then say, with the profoundest reverence, he is that eternal, independent, self-existent being, whose purposes and actions are from himself ; who is absolute in his dominion, and pure and spiritual in his nature ; who though he is indescribable in his essence, and inconceivable in the mode of his existence, illimit-

able in his immensity, and fully known only to himself; yet we are instructed by reason as well as scripture to ascribe to him certain attributes, among which are the following :

1. Infinite power ; an energy to do and cause others to do, whatever he wills should be done ; by which he at the first created the worlds, and upholds all things, visible and invisible.

2. Infinite wisdom ; that grand attribute of his nature by which he knows all things possible, devises whatever will promote his own glory, and the greatest good of his creatures, and adopts all such means as are best suited to its accomplishment.

3. Infinite goodness ; that absolute perfection which comprises perfect holiness, justice, truth, and mercy, to all the subjects of his creation and care.

Now to impress upon our minds as distinct an idea as possible of this infinitely glorious and perfect Being, let us reverently contemplate him under the figure of the human mind, originally created in his image ; not indeed as it now is, but pure, spiritual, and free from weakness or sin, with all its faculties and virtues extended to infinity—let us thus think of him as inhabiting eternity, producing the universe by the instantaneous exercise of his will, beholding at once all things past, present and future—looking upon the heart and its most secret

purposes, and speaking to the soul in a voice that awakens and electrifies all its powers; and who, yet, is an invisible but infinite energy, that surrounds, protects, and upholds us. Thus perhaps, we shall arrive at the most familiar, and at the same time, the most correct impressions of the nature and attributes of God.

The Divine perfections of power, wisdom, and goodness, are wonderfully displayed in the works of creation and providence. The immensity, variety, and perfection of the works of creation, give the most exalted idea of that power which created "all things, visible and invisible," and upholds and circumscribes the universe. Psalms 139: 8, 11, 14. Heb. 1; 3. Acts 17; 24, 28. If we look at the order of nature, the harmony of the heavenly bodies, the change of the seasons and the alternations of day and night—the nice adaptation of part to part, and of means to ends, in the natural and moral world, we cannot but admire the wisdom that contrived, as well as the power that executed, and exclaim with the devout Psalmist, "how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." Psalms 104; 24.

Nor when we observe the general tendency of all things to promote the objects of benevolence; the provisions made for the support, defence, and comfort, of the creatures of every element and climate; or the perfect manner in which the sen-

ses of all creatures are suited to the objects with which they are conversant, so as to derive not only use, but also pleasure, each from their appropriate objects—that the mind and heart are so constituted as to derive succor from truth and virtue, and happiness from the good it imparts to others—I say when we carefully observe all these benevolent arrangements, in the works and providence of God, we are constrained to confess and adore the creator, as being “good unto all, and his tender mercies over all his works.” Psalms 145 : 9.

Each of these attributes being unlimited, they must all be present in every act of God, from the greatest to the least ; especially must they all concur in fixing and bringing about the destiny of man, which from its connection with the happiness of Angels and the glory of God, must be by far the most illustrious display of wisdom, power, and goodness, the universe can ever witness. Power therefore will perform nothing which is not directed by wisdom, and wisdom can direct nothing but what goodness approves. So that the power of God, mighty and glorious as it is, will never cast even a sparrow on the ground, without the consent of his heavenly wisdom, and the holy approval of his infinite goodness. Although one attribute of the Divine Nature may be more conspicuous in certain acts of God’s government, than

the others, as for instance, in the punishment of sinners, the justice of God is specially manifested, while in the pardon of the penitent his mercy seems to triumph ; yet all must be supposed as consenting to each act of his government, so that there is ever the most perfect harmony between the Divine Attributes. The perfect consistency and harmony of the perfections of Deity, is most wonderfully illustrated in the ever adorable plan of redemption, by Jesus Christ our Lord, revealed in the Gospel, by which God and all his perfections will be glorified. To show this, will be the pleasurable and interesting task of future lectures ; but for the present, we shall content ourselves with the consideration of the relation which subsists between the leading attributes of God, above mentioned, and the human race.

It is obviously true that the relation between the glorious ruler of the universe and every individual of the whole race of mankind as creatures is the same ; he being their creator, preserver, and the disposer of their destiny. In the highest possible sense he is their Father ; they having each and equally derived from him their being, capacities, means of improvement, and resources of enjoyment. He only does or can protect and sustain them. It requires the same power to create one as another of the human family ; and the same to preserve them from one moment or

hour to another, as it did to create them at first. And hence the phenomena of our preservation exhibits the constant exercise of creative and Omnipotent power, wisdom and goodness; for should these be suspended for a single moment, we should fall into annihilation, and cease to be. How true is it then, that in the highest sense "we live, move, and have our being" in God, as the result of his relation to us as our constant and equal preserver, and most holy and bountiful benefactor! Every added moment of our existence brings us new proofs of his infinite care and love, and should excite us to renewed gratitude and obedience; and thus make our duty to him and to each other, as the common sharers of his bounty, the richest pleasure of life.

Not only is God good, and equally good to mankind, as their creator and preserver; but also as their moral ruler and governor. Having created them free, moral, and accountable beings, they all hold the same general relation to his moral government, i. e. each is responsible in exact proportion to the moral power given him, and to the opportunities afforded him for its improvement; so that one can as easily perform his duty as another.

It should, however, be considered here, that God's moral government is to be viewed as a whole, and as extending over this and a future

state. Taking in then, the whole course of its administration, all the moral as well as natural attributes of God will be fully developed towards mankind, so that with him there will be "no respect of persons." If therefore there be, as there certainly is, a difference in the degrees of happiness enjoyed by men in the present world, during the intermediate state, and at the day of judgment ; this is not because God is not equally good to them, but because they do not equally improve the power and blessings he has bestowed upon them.

Justice, mercy, compassion and grace, are administered to every man upon precisely the same principles, and with most perfect impartiality ; for that which in one man procures punishment, procures it in the case of every man ; and that which entitles one man to mercy and pardon, entitles every man to like favor.

Hence, mercy, justice, and every attribute of the Divine Nature, are extended to every individual of mankind upon equal conditions ; because those attributes are infinite, and therefore equal : and hence upon the same condition that one sinner can be saved, all sinners may be saved ; so that the wisdom and perfections of God are "without partiality." Therefore it is not true that justice will be glorified in the damnation of some sinners, and mercy in the salvation of others equally guilty,

and in the same circumstances. This would subvert all our ideas of impartiality on the part of the divine government, and of moral equality on the part of men as moral agents ; and be opposed to the plainest declarations of scripture, and the soundest dictates of reason.

Hence by this reasoning, we are naturally and irresistably brought to the conclusion, that all men as the creatures of his power, and as moral agents or subjects of his moral dominion, are equally the offspring of God, the subjects of his care, and the objects of his love ; and that their conduct is, and ever will be, the object of his approbation or displeasure, and the subject of his reward or punishment, according as it is conformed or not conformed to his law. He that created them so fearfully, wonderfully and mercifully, bestowed on them his own image, and gave them such natural and moral powers, must esteem and value them not only as his own work, but for their capacities to glorify and enjoy him and his kingdom forever. That his esteem may be of use to them, and excite their gratitude to him, he has constituted them with their agency and noble faculties, so immediately dependent upon himself for being, preservation and happiness, that without his constant aid and help, they can neither exist nor arrive at perfect happiness, after which he has made them so earnestly to aspire. And that a sense of this de-

pendence should not be grievous to them, he has required, and ever will require them, and each of them, and that equally, to put their trust in him as the guardian of their being, and the benefactor of their happiness ; and to bestow on him their supreme love, as their chief good, here and hereafter : and this requirement is the spirit of "the law and the prophets." Here let it be noted, that the requiring of all to love and serve God, and to confide in him, is virtually a pledge that his power, wisdom and goodness, are and will always be exerted in their favor.

Such being the character of God, the nature and tendency of his attributes, and their relation to men ; and such being the nature, capacities, dependence, and obligations of mankind to their Maker ; the question now is, what destination does reason, founded on these facts, teach us to believe God will assign to them ? and will that destination be the same to all ?

Three dispositions only can be made of men ; they must be finally happy, or miserable, or be forever annihilated. The power of God is able to effect either ; but could wisdom and goodness approve of perpetual misery, or of annihilation ? Would it be an act of infinite wisdom to create man with his present capacities, for the purpose of enduring unceasing woe ? And, especially, what goodness would there be displayed in the bestow-

ment of existence, either for perpetual sufferings, or to be blotted out from the universe as an incurable? It is an exercise of divine wisdom to produce good, and to extend the sphere of virtue, intelligence and happiness; but what wisdom there can be in creating intelligent beings to be losers by their existence, it would certainly be very difficult to show: and still more so, to describe what exhibition of goodness there would be, in so doing. Nay to make men miserable, or to annihilate them, requires neither wisdom nor goodness; but to secure them the possession of endless existence, and the enjoyment of endless happiness, requires the perfection of those attributes, and the aid of infinite power. Therefore if wisdom and goodness were employed in the creation of men, they must have been created for the attainment and enjoyment of happiness, as the wisest and most benevolent destiny which could be assigned them; but wisdom and love were employed in the gift of their existence, and therefore their destiny must be happiness, without the mixture of evil. If then God intended Adam, and in him, mankind to be happy, then he must have had the same purpose with reference to each individual; because they all sustained the same relation to him, and each other. And if he created each individual of the human race for happiness, then all his attributes must have concurred in that design, and

hence are pledged for its accomplishment—then also human agency, with the nature and capacities of men, were constituted and given with reference to that design ; and the whole moral government of God, suited to its ultimate execution ; which being the case, the operations of justice, as well as of mercy and the other attributes of his government, must result in the production of happiness and of equal good to every son and daughter of Adam.

Therefore we answer the above questions, by saying, that just reasoning, founded on the divine character, the divine attributes, and the nature and equality of men, teaches us to believe that the design of God in the creation of Adam and each member of his posterity, was that he and they should be equally perfect in piety, virtue and happiness : and also that notwithstanding the introduction of sin by man, through the perversion of his agency, yet the moral government of God, founded on his holy perfections, will correct this evil, restore the whole human family, and thus carry into full effect the glorious design of their creation. And indeed we are fully persuaded that there is the same reason for believing that all men, without exception, will ultimately be saved, that there is for believing that any one of them will be. We should therefore, reasoning upon the attributes of God, as readily admit the endless per-

dition of all, as of any one of the children of men.

Should it be objected to this, that God, consistently with his holiness and goodness, administers punishment upon sinners in the present world, and therefore he may with equal propriety, as he changes not, continue to do so to eternity ; we answer, there is a wide difference between the punishment which God inflicts upon transgressors, here or hereafter, as a mean of subduing and reforming them, and endless perdition ; the one promotes human virtue and happiness, the other necessarily precludes both, and that to eternity. And hence it does not follow that the goodness of God, could as well admit the one as the other of these propositions:

We proposed in this lecture, to show that the character and attributes of God, from their equal relation to all mankind, furnish us with strong reasons for believing in their final and universal restoration to holiness and happiness ; and have we not now redeemed our pledge ? And does not this view, reflect the highest glory upon the divine perfections, and present his moral government in such a light as justly to command the reverence, confidence, and obedience of every creature ? Most certainly ; since according to it, God can admit no evil into the universe but such as he will overrule for his own glory and the good of his rational creatures ; and since he will administer no

punishment but such as is emendatory in its design, and will be salutary in its effects, resulting in the subjection and obedience of the sinner to the divine will.

To conclude, we are confirmed in the correctness of this result to which our reasoning hath so clearly brought us, because the superior authority of the scriptures, as we have shown in previous lectures, offers nothing against it—because there is nothing in the nature of our agency or responsibility to God, which opposes it—and because it is sustained by the voice of inspiration, which assures us that God hath “made all things for himself;” that he “will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,” and that he is the Saviour of all men,” having promised “the restitution of all things by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began,” as we shall attempt more fully to evince in future lectures.

Moreover, we are persuaded that this view of the plan of God, when correctly understood and received in the love of it, will offer the best incentives to sincere piety, and the most universal encouragement to the practice of virtue among men, as moral and accountable agents—that it best comports with the *desire* of those who are most under the influence of the spirit of pure religion, and contributes most to the happiness of good men in the present life ; for what good man can be happy in

seriously contemplating the endless sufferings of his fellow creatures!

But the salvation of the world, by a full display of the divine perfections, will afford a theme of joy for eternity, while in acclamations of praise and glory to God in the highest, angels and the redeemed shall vie with each other in cries of "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts ; the whole earth is full of his glory."

LECTURE VII.



PROOFS OF THE FINAL RESTORATION.

II. CORINTHIANS, V. 14, 15.

"FOR THE LOVE OF GOD CONSTRAINETH US; BECAUSE WE THUS JUDGE, THAT IF ONE DIED FOR ALL, THEN WERE ALL DEAD: AND THAT HE DIED FOR ALL, THAT THEY WHICH LIVE SHOULD NOT HENCEFORTH LIVE UNTO THEMSELVES, BUT UNTO HIM WHICH DIED FOR THEM, AND ROSE AGAIN."

IT is the character of Christ which sheds over the sacred pages such an heavenly lustre; and gives to them their infinite value to the children of men. Take from the Bible the prophecies, history, doctrines and precepts of Jesus, and it would be little better to sinners than a blank-book—a dead letter; but with them, it is a light from

heaven, bringing glad tidings of salvation to all people. The most important particulars in the character of our blessed Lord, are his mission, works, and death; which, taken in connexion with our lost condition, and as forming the ground of our richest hopes, for the present and future life, surpass all things else in the intense interests which they awaken in the human breast.

Now that the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the salvation which he came to bring, may be the more highly esteemed by us; and that his ministry and word may be the less neglected by our indifference; let us briefly consider the great necessity in which we stand of the aid and help of such a Saviour.

The scriptures assure us, that although man was created for happiness and glory, yet all have sinned and came short of that glory—that as such they were fallen in the region and shadow of death, with no eye to pity and no arm to save, being without God and without hope in the world. Such was the forlorn condition in which Christ, according to the authority of inspiration, found the whole human race. Likewise, the voice of history declares the unhappy state of the world in all ages past, especially in those before the coming of Christ, by reciting the sad account of the war and carnage which have desolated the earth; the oppressions which have made its inhabitants to ago-

nise; and the crimes which have embittered all the relations of society, and the fountains of life.

From this condition, our own experience sufficiently shows us that we could not have rescued ourselves; for we have neither power to release the soul from the anguish of guilt, or the body from the pains and bondage of death. Therefore, besides the name of Christ, there is not a name given under heaven whereby we could have been saved. But such being our need of a saviour, God in his infinite compassion laid help for us on "one mighty to save," and sent his Son from heaven to release us, and bring us again "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." This view of the subject should awaken in us the warmest gratitude to Heaven, the most fervent love to Christ, and excite us to a most cheerful obedience to the gospel.

We propose now to examine the proofs of the "universal restoration," found in the mission, works, and death of Jesus Christ.

First then, the mission of Christ; for what end was he born? for what purpose was he sent into the world? and what will be the result of that religion and system of means which he came to establish on the earth? The purpose of God in sending him into the world, must be either the salvation of the whole world, or a select part of it; and therefore we adopt it as the scripture doctrine that he was sent to redeem, sanctify, and

finally save, the whole human race, and that without exception.

This doctrine relative to the object of Christ's mission, is supported by the scriptures, in numerous places, and by a great variety of modes of expression. They assure us that the mission of Jesus was the effect of God's love to the world ; " for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."* What greater proof of his love to the world could God have given, than was given by sending his son to be its saviour ! The name Jesus, i. e. saviour, given to Christ by the angel of God, imports the nature of his mission, as being sent to " save his people from their sins."† The first intimation of the Messiah's approach, announces him as the seed of the woman, who shall bruise the head of the serpent ;‡ interpreted by St. Paul, in these words, he shall " destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them, who, through the fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage."|| Speaking of him, God says, by the prophet Isaiah, " I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,

*St. John iii. 16, 17. †St. Matt. i. 21. ‡Gen. iii. 15.
||Heb. ii. 14, 15.

that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."§

Jesus himself says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me (i. e. *the heathen and uttermost parts of the earth*) I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."† And this view of the Father's will which Christ came to do, agrees with St. Paul's interpretation of the will of God, "who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."‡ Our Lord further says, "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.¶ And St. John proclaims with peculiar emphasis, "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world."†† These are but a few of the passages which might be quoted from the sacred writings, to prove that the design of our Saviour's mission into the world, was not the salvation of a select part only, but the whole world; for much of the New Testament, the sublimity and benevolence of his doctrines, the purity and reasonableness of his precepts, and the tendency of his religion to universal happiness, might be successfully urged in its support.

§Isaiah xlix, 6. †St. John vi. 38, 39. ‡1. Tim. ii. 4. ||St. Luke xix. 10. †† 1. John iv. 14.

Expressive of the high authority and dignity of him who came on such a mission, legions of angels announced his approach, and ministered to him, during the whole course of his ministry on earth, and his return to heaven. And for the finishing of the mighty work of his mission, all power in heaven and earth was given into his hands ; so that of his ability to finish it there can be no doubt.

We are to notice some of the most important works of Christ, performed in the progress of his ministry on earth, in virtue of the mission and power given him.

To say nothing of the ordinary works of our Lord, as " he went about doing good," we may remark that he performed, in the short space of his brief ministry among men, forty wonderful and splendid miracles, on forty different occasions, in open day-light, before friends and enemies, in the presence of the rulers, scribes, and multitudes of the people ; and by these miracles did he exhibit his complete power and dominion over the invisible world, by calling Moses and Elias from thence to confer with him on the mount of transfiguration ; over the natural world, by stilling the tempest and calming the sea ; over the mental world, by restoring the shattered powers of the lunatic ; over the moral world, by forgiving sin, and removing the anguish of guilt from the peni-

tent sinner's conscience ; over the bodies of men, by healing all manner of diseases and raising up the dead ; over demons, by casting them out and releasing both the body and the soul from their pernicious influence. These mighty works were all done not only by a power manifestly from heaven, but by a sympathy and kindness of feeling, which wept at the grave of Lazarus, and at the gate of Jerusalem ; had compassion on the wretched woman that touched the hem of his garment ; commended in his dying hour his mother to the care of a beloved disciple, and his murderers to the favor of God, and was nobly touched with the feeling of all our infirmities and sufferings. They were therefore every one of them miracles of divine mercy as well as of heavenly power ; and hence to be regarded as practical proofs of the divinity of his mission, and of his perfect ability and disposition to perform all its duties for the salvation of men, and to the acceptance of the Most High. Who that considers the vast variety of the wonderful works of Christ, and places before his mind's eye the most splendid and gracious of them all, his ascension into heaven, in the view of men and angels in a chariot of light, and dispensing as he ascended higher, rich, inestimable and saving gifts to the world, whose cause he ascends to plead before the throne of heaven ; and not, with the delighted men of Samaria, exclaim, " we have seen

him ourselves, and do know that he is the Christ, the saviour of the world." But it is the sufferings and death of Christ, rather than the beneficence of his miracles, that we look for the proofs of his great and saving love to the world ; and hence,

3. We come to the consideration of the *death* of Christ. That he died is asserted by all christians, and that he died for the redemption of men ; but whether for the whole human race, is not agreed, some averring that he did, and others that he did not. We propose not in this place to inquire whether his death be the procuring cause of salvation, or the expression and attestation of God's love, and hence the pledge that God will save those for whom he died, by the means of grace contained in that religion which his death served to establish ; for, although this question may be of interest in some points of view, yet in regard to our present inquiry it is of no importance, as in either case, if he died for every man, then the salvation of every man must be effected either by it as the procuring cause, or by the redemption of the pledge, given by it, through the faithfulness of God.

The question then is this, did our blessed Saviour suffer and die for every man without exception ? This question the apostle, in the text, answers in the affirmative. True, he takes the fact

that Christ died for all, for granted, i. e. as a sentiment which no christian of his day disbelieved, saying "if one died for all, (as you all admit) then were all dead : and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." Here he states the admitted fact that "one died for all;" and then draws from it two inferences, one of fact, and the other of duty : thus "if one died for all," then this inference is plain, viz. all were dead, or under the sentence of death : Again : if one died for all, then again the inference is equally clear, viz. that all should "live unto him who died for them." Now if any one deny that Christ died for all, he must, to be consistent with himself, also deny that all are dead or under the sentence of death, and also that all are obligated to live to Christ ; but this, we think, no one would be willing to do. The equal necessity of all for the redemption of Christ, connected with the goodness of God, furnishes a very strong argument in favor of the doctrine of the universality of his atonement. Yet we rest not the sentiment upon this or any other reasoning, seeing the higher authority of revelation is at hand.

The three following passages seem to place this inquiry beyond controversy, viz. 1. Tim. ii. 5, 6. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ; who gave

himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Heb. ii. 9. "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." 1. John, ii. 2. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

It is not easy to conceive how the universality of Christ's death, could have been expressed in stronger and more unequivocal terms than are employed in the above scriptures. The terms *all*, *every man*, and the *whole world*, not applied to a family, society, city, country, or nation, but to mankind, must embrace the human race without exception. And further, when it is considered that there is not a single passage in the Bible, that limits the death of Christ and its benefits to any section or part of mankind, to the exclusion of others, we cannot but perceive that the whole of the sacred writings assent to the truth affirmed by the above passages, and therefore confirm their testimony. And hence, the united voice of revelation proclaims that Jesus died for all, and in that he died for all, there is none for whom he did not die, and give himself a ransom, that they might live, and finally inherit life eternal.

The power and efficacy of the death of the Lord Jesus, as a mean to accomplish the di-

vine purpose, is attested by the astonishing events which accompanied it ; for when he died, the sun refused to shine from the sixth to the ninth hour ; the veil of the Temple was parted, the rocks were rent, the graves of the saints were opened, and the earth shaken to its centre. And these events were followed by the still more surprising ones of the resurrection of the Lord, and of many of his saints, who arose and appeared to many, as the witnesses that death was conquered, and life and immortality brought to light.

Again the gospel speaks of Christ crucified, under the figure of a ransom ; and therefore whether it be a ransom of life for life, or of price for the redemption of sinners, if accepted by the power to whom it was offered, it must effect the release of all for whom it was offered, or be wholly in vain.

Now on the subjects of the mission, works, and death of our Lord, the following reasoning appears conclusive. 1st. If, as we have shown, God sent his son to redeem, and finally, to restore all men to holiness and happiness ; then it must be agreeable to his counsel and purpose, that that great event should be perfectly accomplished. And then also it must be possible that it should be so done, in perfect consistency with the moral agency and freedom of men, the moral government of God, and the scripture doctrine of rewards, punish-

ments, and pardons, as promised and dispensed by the gospel. 2. If Jesus really performed the miracles ascribed to him in the New Testament, as all christians believe he did, and with the love and compassion evinced by his voluntary sufferings and death for every man ; then he must have both power and the inclination to do and accomplish, in a manner not in the least subversive of our responsibility to the divine law, whatever is necessary to the moral subjection, and the restoring of every creature to the obedience of the divine will.

3. And if Jesus Christ, in addition to all he did and said during his life on earth for the reformation, comfort and happiness of men, did, as the ambassador of God and in obedience to his will, give "himself a ransom for all," with the purpose of effecting the regeneration of every son and daughter of Adam, in the present or future world, and if God accepted him as such a ransom, as he most certainly did, when he seated him at his own right hand in heavenly places ; then the "universal restoration" has the seal of heaven set upon it, as divine truth.

Whosoever questions the correctness of this conclusion, must deny that God sent his son into the world to be the saviour of the whole human race, or maintain that his mission will fail, the power and grace exhibited by his works and miracles, be incompetent, and the efficacy of his death prove

insufficient to save the world ; which must produce an infinite disappointment to the Deity, and cut off all ground of hope from men ; for if the mission, power and death of Christ, as they are proclaimed in the gospel, fail us as the ground of hope, in what shall we confide ? And if God be disappointed, why should not the plan of salvation utterly fail, and the world be left in despair ? But who would be willing to assume this ground of argument against our position ? No one, we trust ; and therefore the mission of Christ, and the “ universal restoration,” must stand or fall together.

Such then being the design of our Saviour’s mission, it claims from the world the highest respect, and for his doctrines and precepts the most cordial reception and the most cheerful and constant obedience. Such being the character and tendency of his miracles and examples of life ; they are the heavenly patterns of piety, virtue, and benevolence, given for the love and imitation of men in every sphere of duty : and such being the purpose and efficacy of his death ; every man for whom he died, is under the highest obligations of gratitude to heaven for the preaching of the gospel of Christ and him crucified ; and has the highest interest in placing himself at the foot of the cross, and owning him who bled upon it as his blessed Lord and Saviour.

Again : upon the truth of this view of the sub-

ject, must depend the criminality of those persons who reject the gospel; for if there be any one of all the human race, whom Jesus was not sent to save, and for whose redemption he did not give himself a ransom, his rejection of Christ and the gospel, so far at least as his own salvation is concerned, can be no violation of the will of God, or of his own duty; as truth and justice cannot require us to believe what is not true. But if, as we have shown to be the case, Christ came down from heaven, lived, died and rose again, for the salvation of "every man;" then whosoever denies the messiahship of Jesus, scoffs at his religion, and tramples upon the institutions of his gospel, denies the Holy One, treads under foot the blood of the covenant, and does despite to the spirit of grace, as the fruit of God's everlasting love.

This doctrine of *Christ crucified for the world*, is most admirably calculated to overcome the idolatry, irreligion, and skepticism, which have and still do prevail in the earth; and to unite men of every age and nation in the worship of one God, the love of one Saviour, and in the blessed hopes and comforts of one holy religion. It offers to men the most reasonable inducements to honor and love the name of Jesus, and to detest and avoid infidelity as the basest ingratitude to heaven, and the bane of human life. It invites a world from the degrading vices, ignorance, and cruelties of

heathenism;—from the licentiousness, the intemperance, and loathsome haunts of the profaners of sacred truth;—from the awful and desolating scenes of war, rapine and murder; and bids them seek at the feet of Jesus the pardon of their sins, the instructions of his word, the heavenly rest and peace, and joy of his kingdom on earth, and a crown of life that fadeth not away in heaven.

In what way could our Lord so glorify the Father, as by thus inducing the world to forsake their sins, and to seek and find eternal life? In what other way could he clothe himself with such distinguished honor, or confer on the world such high and sacred obligations of love, gratitude and obedience? And are not love and gratitude among the most powerful incentives to virtue and piety, since as christians, *we love God because he first loved us, and sent his son to die for us?*

Why then should it be thought incredible, that he who came on such a mission, and who did so much to make men holy and happy while he was here, should continue to exert his power and grace, till he brings *every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess, and wipe away the tears of grief from every human eye?* As the judge of men, can he not sufficiently excite the fear and apprehension of sinners, without the infliction of such a punishment as must forever exclude them from being *restored* by his mercy? This, we think, must be admitted;

else to reward men according to their works, must be opposed to the heavenly doctrine of salvation by grace, a sentiment which would be most dishonorable to the moral government of our Heavenly Father ; for then the law of God would be against his promises, which an inspired apostle has asserted not to be true. And therefore no valid objection can be brought against the moral tendency of this noble sentiment.

Hence we are constrained to believe, that the blessed gospel of a crucified Saviour, will prevail through the whole earth, and completely triumph over idolatry, error and vice ; reconcile a world to God and to each other, and fill the earth with the praise and glory of his grace. Therefore let every man that hath this hope in his heart, purify himself from sinful and selfish feelings, cultivate the most enlarged views of benevolence among men, and use his utmost exertions to impart the rich and saving knowledge of the mission, works, and sufferings of Jesus to every nation, kindred, tongue and people ; that every child of Adam may behold him as the lovely shepherd of Israel, feel their need of his help, cry to him and be saved.

Heaven grant that such a spirit and such a religion, may speedily come upon the rulers of the earth, the ministry of the gospel, the church of God, and upon all the people ; and to God and his Christ be the glory, forever.

LECTURE VIII.



PROOFS OF THE FINAL RESTORATION.

II. CORINTHIANS, I. 20.

"FOR ALL THE PROMISES OF GOD IN HIM ARE YEA, AND IN HIM AMEN,
UNTO THE GLORY OF GOD BY US."

REVELATION is the greatest and richest of blessings to man. It discloses the perfections of Deity, and the designs of his government ; it opens to our view the felicities of Eternity, and shows us the way to attain them ; and teaches us to aspire to Heaven as our destined home. Compared with these treasures, what are the riches, the honors, or the pleasures of this short and changeful life ?

But that which adds to the scriptures their greatest value to us as sinners, is the spirit of promise and grace which runs through the sacred volume, from the beginning to the end, as a vein of the richest gold, offering divine aid and success to those who seek the heavenly inheritance. These precious promises all flow through one only medium, the Lord Jesus Christ ; for out of him there are no promises of salvation. The spirit and design of all the promises is therefore, to set forth the riches of grace in Christ for penitent sinners, the treasures of glory he has prepared for them, and the blessed rewards he will confer upon their obedience and fidelity, as followers and friends ; and thus to endear to men the goodness of Him who sent his son to be the saviour of the world, and thus to encourage them in the practice of virtue and filial piety.

When, however, we connect the several parts of Christianity, its doctrines, histories, precepts, promises, and warnings, as a whole, it is a most perfect system of promises—one great promise, embracing whatever could reasonably restrain our propensities to evil, and check the vicious in their rash career to wretchedness—whatever could conduce to the temporal, spiritual, and eternal happiness of men, individually and collectively. Hence, all parts of the Bible are to be considered in connection with the promises of salvation by a Re-

deemer, and as necessary to their perfect accomplishment ; nothing therefore, as designed by the Holy Spirit, is against the promises, but all the scriptures "are yea" and "amen" to the glory of God," by the preaching of the gospel.

For this doctrine we have the authority of St. Paul, saying "Is the law against the promises of God? God forbid." According to this authority, the promises take the lead in the sacred writings, expressing the great designs of their Beneficent Author ; and hence all the requirements, warnings, and denunciations therein contained, must in their ultimate design and tendency, perfectly harmonize with them ; so that the whole word of God, may, in the comprehensive language of the angel, be declared "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

From this perfect harmony of the scriptures, it follows, that all punishments therein denounced upon the wicked, must be intended to reform the transgressor, and thereby fit him to be partaker of the promises ; so that the threatenings may all be fully accomplished, and yet the promises all be realised ; nay more, they are in the plan of infinite wisdom and grace, necessary as preparatives, for the fulfilment of the promises. There is an indescribable beauty seen, by viewing the scriptures in this pleasing light ; for the doctrines explain the grounds, nature and import of the promises ;

the threatenings warn us of the evils of sin, and awaken us to a sense of our need of the blessings promised by the gospel ; and the precepts teach us how to obtain and enjoy the rich promises of grace here, and of glory hereafter.

The benefits resulting from this glorious system of promises, through one gracious Mediator, can be received only by faith—faith in Christ, faith in the promises, and not in the promises only, but also in the precepts and threatenings with which the sacred volume abounds ; for all parts of the scripture being necessary to salvation, faith in all those parts, must be necessary to a saving faith. Without this faith, the promises, however great and glorious they may be, can have no power to comfort, strengthen or encourage us. They remain to us a dead letter, a mere nullity, till they are received as sacred and revealed truth. But when so received, they become “the power of God unto salvation.”

As well might we expect to enjoy the light of the sun in the firmament without eyes, as to possess the promised blessings of grace without faith. This faith in revelation, is not only a source of consolation to the afflicted, and a powerful support to the soul when the heart and the flesh are failing at the approach of death ; but it is also the most powerful spring to virtue and piety. Who would begin to build, if he had no faith he should

be able to finish? What husbandman would feel courage in the spring, to go forth to the fields and cast in the appointed seed, protect and watch its growth with such interest and patience, were it not for his faith that in the harvest he should reap an abundant reward for his care and toil? Or what disciple could have felt the courage to follow his blessed Saviour through evil as well as good report, submit to the loss of all things, and to death itself, had he not believed his Lord, according to promise, *would be with him always, make him more than a conqueror over death, and give to him a crown of everlasting life?*

Having thus attempted to show the unity of the promises, the harmony of the promises with the other parts and doctrines of the scriptures, and the necessity of faith in them; let us now inquire whether God has promised in his word, the universal restoration, i. e. in the fulness of times, to subdue each of the human race to perfect obedience, and to bring them to be genuine christians in temper, spirit, and feeling; and thus make them heirs of his everlasting kingdom? Which if we succeed to do, it will then be proved that all the scriptures support the doctrine, and that faith in it is necessary to salvation.

For the purpose of this inquiry, we may divide the promises into those which declare the divine purpose to remove the sources of evil, or the

obstructions in the way of human happiness; and secondly, those that describe the good he will confer.

The general and special sources of human misery are sin, sorrow and death. Sin is the general source of all sufferings ; although sorrow and death are second causes of great anguish and pain in the world. Were men to be separated from sin, they would be free from death, sorrow, and every cause of human disquiet. And if they were exempt from death, and the other causes of grief they would also be free from the dominion and influences of sin. Now the first class of the promises to which we have alluded, very plainly announces the destruction of all these sources of human woe. As, 1st. of sin. St. John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Daniel ix. 24. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." St. Matt. i. 21. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." 1 John ii. 2. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Heb. ix. 26. "Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin, by

the sacrifice of himself." Phil. ii. 10, 11. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." 1. Cor. xv. 25. "For he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet." These promises of God show in the clearest manner, that it is the divine purpose, and the office of Christ, to restrain transgression, make an end of sin offerings, as offered by the law, which he did, by becoming the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world; that he will save his people, not only believers, but the whole world from their sins; and that he will make an end of rebellion, bring every creature to bow to his authority, in heaven, in the earth, and under the earth, and also to abandon their infidelity, confess him Lord and Saviour, so that in the universe there will not be found one single enemy to Jesus, one despiser of his gospel, or one sinner before God. Such are the promises. Do they not plainly declare that sin shall be separated from the hearts and lives of the whole intelligent creation; and so forever be destroyed and borne away?

2. Another great source of sufferings, which God has promised to remove, is death; see Isaiah xxv. 8. "He will swallow up death in victory." Hosea xiii. 14. "I will ransom them from the

power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." 1. Cor. xv. 26, 54. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" Revelations xxi. 4. "And there shall be no more death." According to these passages, God has most solemnly promised, to overcome and conquer death, ransom its subjects, and destroy the place of its dominion; so that nothing, bearing the name or having the properties of death, shall be found any more. Let it be here noted, that while one of the human race remains subject to death, temporal or spiritual, the saints will never be able to sing in shouts of triumph, *O death! where is thy sting? O grave! (hell) where is thy victory?* But that they will have such a glorious victory to sing, who can doubt? Since God will hide repentance, or change of purpose, from his eyes, till it be accomplished; and St. Paul has assured us, that, "As in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive."

3. The last source and proof of misery among men, now to be mentioned, which God has promis-

ed to take away from the world, is that of sorrow, grief, despair. The following are the promises referred to ; Isaiah, xxv. 8. "The Lord will wipe away tears from off all faces." Revelation xxi. 4. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away." These, with many other passages of like import, prove most conclusively, first, that God will wipe tears from off all faces ; second, that he will wipe all tears from each face. And third, that there shall be no more weeping ; for all the causes of grief will have passed away.

Therefore, by this class of the promises, God has given us the strongest assurance that he will, by the agency and grace of Jesus Christ, take away the sins of the whole world, making an end of its dominion over the human mind ; that he will destroy death, release all that have been, are, or shall be subject to its power, and bring all weeping, grief and sorrow to a final end.

Having thus noticed the promises which speak of the destruction of sin and misery ; we now come to those that confer happiness. Of this class are 1. The great leading covenant promise made of God to Abraham. When God called Abraham to leave his country and kindred, he gave him several great promises, and concluded with these gracious words,

“And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” See Gen. xii. 1, 2, 3. And after he had passed the trial of offering up his son, it pleased Jehovah to confirm these promises by an oath, saying, “By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: in blessing I will bless thee,” &c. “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Gen. xxii. 16, 18. This same glorious promise was renewed to Isaac, in these words, “And I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father, &c. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, &c. Gen. xxvi. 3, 4, 5. And the same was confirmed unto Jacob, in nearly the same language, “And in thee, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Gen. xxviii. 14.

This glorious promise, the apostle calls the gospel preached by Jehovah, see Gal. iii. 8. “And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed.” “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: he saith not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Ver. 16.

Surely, all nations, families, and kindreds of

the earth, intend mankind without any exception ; and they all are to be blessed in Christ, with the gospel blessings of justification and life eternal, according to St. Paul's commentary of this promise of God made to the fathers : which is the foundation of the gospel, and the only ground of the faith delivered to the saints.

2. Those which proclaim the universal spread of the gospel, see Isaiah xlv. 23. "I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater ; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth ; it shall not return unto me void ; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." "For this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts ; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people ; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord ; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. Isaiah lv. 10, 11. Heb. viii. 10, 11.

These scripture promises not only assert that the gospel which God sent *into all the world*, and commanded to be proclaimed *to every creature*, will universally prevail ; but also that it will be written in the *hearts of all men, from the least to the greatest*, producing a most hearty and willing subjection to the divine will, and effecting all the purposes of its revelation.

3. Those which describe the extent of the Messiah's kingdom and reign. Psalm ii. 7, 8. " I will declare the decree ; the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son ; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." " I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." " And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." " And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great

voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign forever and ever." "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Dan. vii. 13, 14, 27. Rev. xi. 15. Eph. iv. 10, 11, 12, 13. Phil. ii. 9, 10 11.

These prophetic promises, (for so we view them) give assurance that the kingdom of Christ will continue its growth, until it embraces in its bosom all people, nations, and kingdoms of this world not only, but all who have passed to the world of spirits, each being of one faith, and perfect in Christ, so that he will be revered and admired as *King of Kings, and Lord of the*

dead and living. What a glorious dominion will that be, which our Lord will extend over all men in this, and a future world, as his redeemed, willing, and happy subjects, bound to him by perfect love and gratitude.

4. Those which contrast evil with good, showing that the latter will greatly surpass the former ; that the good, by Christ, will more than balance the evils, by Adam. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam, all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1. Cor. xv. 21, 22. "Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ; therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift hath come upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound : but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound ; that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Rom. v. 12, 18, 19, 20, 21. and viii. 21.

Here we have the apostle's contrast of death by Adam, with the resurrection by Christ—of condemnation for sin, with justification by grace—of sin, with righteousness—of the limited reign of misery, with the endless reign of happiness—of the bondage of corruption, with the glorious liberty of the sons of God—and of the number that sinned, with the number that shall be saved. And what is the result of this contrast? Answer, this is the result; the same persons that die in Adam are to be made alive in Christ; the same persons that are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam, will be justified by the obedience of Jesus Christ; and all who groan in the bondage of corruption, will possess the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What a glorious and universal restoration is here promised of the whole sinful, suffering, and dying race of Adam! A restoration to life, purity, joy, and glory; wherein grace shall abound beyond the reign of sin, and righteousness extend its dominion beyond the power of death, in an eternity of bliss and glory.

We now ask what evils do exist in the universe that God has not promised to destroy? What good that can be imagined for the human race, is there, that God has not promised to bestow?

Now for the confirmation of our faith, and the encouragement of our obedience, let us notice that the promises of God, on each of the above men-

tioned subjects, lead us to the same conclusion ; and each in their result, perfectly sustain the final restitution of the whole human race. For if the sin of the world be separated from it, and taken away ; then the world must be holy and happy ; if death be destroyed, all must have life eternal ; if all tears be wiped from all faces, then perfect joy must be the portion of each ; if every man of every nation be blessed and justified in Christ, the seed of Abraham, then guilt and sufferings must cease forever ; if the true gospel and kingdom of Christ prevail over the whole earth and be written in every heart, and not only this, but if every knee “ of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth,” shall bow to Christ, and every tongue confess him to be Lord to the glory of God the Father ; then must *the restoration* to perfection and felicity be strictly universal, and the reign of righteousness extend infinitely beyond that of sin, misery, and death. Not only do all the promises but every part of the scriptures, even the threatenings and judgments of God, according to this plan, promote the cause of righteousness and salvation. What a foundation is here laid for our faith, hope and consolation ; what gentle cords of love draw us to the obedience of him, in whom are all the promises of grace and of glory ; what a rational and filial fear restrains us from the love of sin ; and what a light spreads itself over the sa-

cred pages, reconciling them in the most perfect harmony?

Thy judgments, O God, are right; and thy promises full of mercy. What thou dost prohibit in thy wisdom, that help us to shun; and what thou hast promised, O help us to believe with the heart, and obey that our souls may take hold on eternal life. Let the moral universe experience the blessed fruition of all thy promises; and to thy name be the glory, in Christ Jesus, amen and amen.

LECTURE IX.



PROOFS OF THE FINAL RESTORATION.

ST. MATTHEW V. 44, 45.

"BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU, DO GOOD TO THEM THAT HATE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THEM THAT DESPITEFULLY USE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU ; THAT YE MAY BE THE CHILDREN OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN ; FOR HE MAKETH HIS SUN TO RISE ON THE EVIL AND ON THE GOOD, AND SENDETH HIS RAIN ON THE JUST AND ON THE UNJUST."

THE morality of the Jews, as well as that of Gentiles, was extremely defective. It was so framed by its teachers, as to be selfish and partial in its operation, it placed a part of the human race

beyond the sympathies and services of the rest of mankind ; it allowed of causeless anger, contempt and lust, provided they did not break out into overt acts ; it weakened the filial respect due from children to parents ; and it failed properly to unite piety and virtue,—love to God, and love to man, as essential and correlative branches of true religion.

The basis of christian morality is supreme love to God, and universal benevolence to mankind ; for the gospel which reveals the greatness of God's love to the world, also enjoins upon every creature the most profound reverence and love for the Deity, and the most sincere good will to each other. These principles carried out into actions, produce a cheerful and conscientious performance of all such acts and services as express reverence, trust, love and gratitude to the Most High ; and also all such acts of justice, truth, and mercy, as express sympathy, fellow feeling, and good will to men. Therefore the same revelation, which teaches the destiny that God has, in his great love, purposed for us his rational creatures, contains also all those precepts, by obedience to which, we may express our piety and benevolence, and be prepared to enjoy the condition he has assigned us ; and hence the scriptures are the only standard of christian faith, and the only perfect manual of moral duty.

The precepts of morality, touching the duty of man to man, found in the gospel, are the divine will in regard to our conduct towards ourselves and fellow creatures. And morality, thus understood, is a part, yea an important part of religion; and it also makes a part of the perfect moral government of God, which extends over all intelligent beings, whether angelic or human, and whether living in this or a future world. Hence, as the purposes and government of the Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth extend over this and a future state, it must be plain that christian morals will in principle, be the same in a future state, as they are in this state, and equally necessary to the future as they are to the present happiness of men and angels.

For if God be unchangeable, and the nature and purposes of his moral dominion be immutable—if the nature of man, and of human felicity, be the same in all worlds; then if God requires his children to love each other here, he will always require them to do so; and if it be right for christians to respect justice, mercy and truth, in their feelings and conduct towards each other and the world now, it will never cease to be right for them to continue so doing. This view of morality renders it truly sacred, adds much to its authority and importance, and should awaken us to a lively sense of the vast interest we have in gaining a

correct understanding of it for ourselves, and of the high obligations which rest upon us to aid its universal diffusion through the earth.

Now as the character and designs of an earthly law-giver are known by the character and tendency of the laws he enacts ; as the wisdom and virtue of a father are plainly inferrable from the wise and salutary rules of moral conduct which he prescribes for the government of his children ; so the benevolence of God, and his purpose to make the intelligent universe ultimately holy and happy, are proved by the tendency of the moral precepts of the bible to effect that most desirable object.

Thus we "make the tree good and its fruit good," which is of all others the most satisfactory method of arriving at truth. For who can reasonably doubt the patriotism of that legislator, all of whose acts tend to the promotion of the public good ? Then who can doubt the design of the Ruler of the Universe to effect the restoration of all his erring children, when all his moral prohibitions and requirements tend to reform, and thus to restore the whole sinful world to the performance of their duty, and to the enjoyment of perfect happiness, through the mediation of his blessed son, and by the ministry of his word and spirit ?

This sentiment we shall now attempt to sustain, by an inquiry into what is prohibited, and what is enjoined by christian morality ; and by showing

that both the prohibitions and injunctions of the word of God tend to produce and perpetuate universal happiness.

First then, the Almighty Guardian of the human race, who is also the avenger of their wrongs, has solemnly prohibited the doing of the least injury or wrong to any one of our fellow creatures in their persons, their properties, or their reputations ; the uttering of falsehood one to another, or the rendering of evil for evil to any. All fraud, prevarication, revenge, injustice and violence, are most peremptorily forbidden, by the scriptures. Rom. xiii. 7, 8. Eph. iv. 25. 2. Cor. viii. 21. Not only are all injurious actions prohibited, but we are commanded not to be angry with a brother without cause ; not to speak evil of any man ; not to raise evil reports ourselves against a neighbor, or spread them when raised by others. Matt. v. 21, 22. Titus iii. 2. But when angry with sufficient cause, we are not to retain it, lest it degenerate into malice ; therefore "let not the sun go down upon your wrath" is the solemn injunction of the Apostle.

We are forbidden to pass rash judgments upon others, lest we should be judged of God ; and even to "think evil" of them, is a violation of christian duty. We may indeed be compelled to see or know evil, but we are never to surmise or think it of any, without proof.

What a protection is here guaranteed to every son and daughter of Adam against evil actions, words, passions, and designs ! by him who condescends to make their cause his own, and proclaims "vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

Second. Nor is christian morality merely negative; it enforces in the most explicit terms, the duty of doing good to all men, as far as we have ability and opportunity— to assist them in their necessities and distresses, to sympathise with them in afflictions and sorrows, and to be ready to distribute of our worldly substance and earnings to their relief and comfort ; to endeavor to convert them from the error of their way, and to reprove their faults in the spirit of kindness and meekness ; and always and by all means to do all in our power to promote their temporal and spiritual welfare. Gal. vi. 10. 1. Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 3, 16. James v. 20. Gal. vi. 1. Rom. xii. 15.

By far the most difficult part of our duty towards mankind, is that which relates to enemies, slanderers, and persecuters ; to these we are enjoined the exercise of a mild and forgiving temper, and not to be overcome of evil but to overcome evil with good. And not this merely ; but to love enemies, and to pray for slanderers and persecuters, that they may see the evil of their way, and turn to the path of duty, is required by Christ and his apostles, as things which should distinguish their

followers. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 17, 21. 1. Thes. v. 15. 1. Pet. iii. 9.

From these general precepts, it is most manifest that the gospel founds the duties of mankind to each other on love ; and that it is the great and constant object to recommend and enforce the practice of universal benevolence, without which there can be no perfect morality, and no true religion.

Besides the general precepts prescribing the duties of justice and benevolence to the whole race of man, the gospel abounds in particular injunctions to those who occupy the several stations and relations of civil and social life, which are of the highest importance to nations, families, and individuals. It requires rulers to be the just, vigilant, and impartial protectors of their people ; and the people to be submissive and obedient to their rulers, praying for their prosperity in righteousness, and rendering them all due support. It requires parents to protect, instruct, govern, and train up their children for usefulness and happiness ; and children to respect and obey their parents. It instructs masters to be kind to their servants, remembering that they also have a master in heaven ; and servants are required to be faithful, rendering service as to the Lord. Husbands are instructed to love, cherish, protect, and support their wives ; and wives directed to love, respect, and promote the happiness of their husbands, and the order of their

families ; that by their united examples, prayers, and efforts, their children may be holy to the Lord. Likewise, superiors and inferiors, the elder and the younger, the rich and the poor, are directed to a proper course of conduct towards each other ; and precepts are given to regulate the deportment of equals among themselves, instructing them to be courteous, in honor preferring one another, not willingly giving offence to any, and endeavoring as far as possible to live peaceably with all men. St. Matt. xxii. 21. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 15. Eph. vi. 5, 9, Col. iii. 22, 25, iv. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 2, 9, 10, 11. Eph. v. 22, 33. Col. iii. 18, 19. Tit. ii. 4, 5. 1 Pet. iii. 8. Rom. xii. 10, 11, 18. 1 Cor. x. 32. Phil. ii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 17, iii. 8, 5.

In regard to those duties which relate more particularly to ourselves, christianity imposes upon its followers the habitual exercise of meekness, sobriety, temperance, chastity ; with humility, cheerfulness, and thanksgiving—to maintain a due degree of self respect, to assert their rights with prudence, and to cultivate their mental, moral, and social natures ; and thus to arrive at perfection. Eph. iv. 26, 27, 31, 32. Col. iii. 12, 14. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Eph. v. 20. Eph. iv. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Phil. iv. 4. Acts xxii. 25. Eph. iv. 13.

Such are briefly the outlines of the morality of the gospel ; a morality admirably suited to the

condition and character of human nature as it develops itself in society ; and which is perfectly congenial with the pure and sacred doctrines of revelation, as flowing with them from the same fountain of wisdom and goodness, and designed to aid the accomplishment of the same high and holy purposes ; which brings us,

Thirdly. To inquire into its tendency. Does it not manifestly conduce to moral and personal happiness, by regulating the temper, passions and affections, furnishing the mind with those noble sentiments of justice, benevolence, and charity, which inspire it with inward peace, and heavenly joy ; and also by securing the body from injury, disease, and suffering, through unnecessary exposure and excess ? Does it not promote social happiness, by prohibiting whatever could break the peace or embitter the relations of society ; and by also exciting all those dispositions of heart, and friendly offices of life, which render the intercourse of its members most useful and happy ? Does it not afford a most pleasing view of human nature, as being allied to one Supreme Father, and as a band of brothers, under mutual obligations of love and good will to each other ? And in what a heavenly light does it present the Mighty Ruler of heaven and earth, as a father in the midst of his vast family, giving them such wise, just, and salutary directions, in regard to their conduct towards one

another, as tends to produce among all its members the most perfect intelligence, safety, harmony, and happiness ?

Therefore we conclude that the morality of the gospel tends to promote and perfect the welfare, not of a part of mankind only, but of the whole human race. The promised rewards to obedience, and all experience as far as experience extends, unite to confirm us in this conclusion. So far as men have departed from this course of moral conduct, they have been scourged with personal and social calamity ; sickness, grief, discontent, contention, and war, have kept pace with the departure. To such degree as it has been reduced to practice by nations and communities, those nations and communities have been united, intelligent, prosperous, and happy. If there have been exceptions to this rule, those exceptions have been the effect of predominant vice in others, and not of any defect in the rule itself.

Having shown that God has prohibited the exercise of all such principles, and the performance of all such acts, as tend to produce misery ; is it not, therefore most evident that he did not create men for the purpose of making them, or allowing them to be made miserable, by themselves or others, as the object of their creation ? And if, as will not be denied, he has commanded them, and all of them to cultivate and exercise all such tempers

feelings, and virtues, as make men happy ; then, does it not also follow that he created them all for happiness, as their final destination ? Can there be any doubt on this subject ? Is there any doubt whether the morality of christianity tends to the universal peace and well being of mankind ? Let us suppose all men to be perfect in the practice of all the moral precepts of the gospel ; and then would they not all be happy ? Most certainly this must be admitted. Then, if God has required all men to do what will make them happy, does he not will that they should be happy ?

Again, if the precepts and doctrines of christianity came from the same source, partake of the same spirit, and harmonise as do *the tree and fruit* ; then as the precepts tend to make the whole human race happy, must it not also follow, that all the doctrines of the gospel have the same gracious tendency ? Were it true that obedience to the doctrines and precepts of religion, conduced to human misery ; then we should rationally think that its Divine Author purposed the misery of mankind. But as the reverse is so manifestly true, we are constrained to believe that God ever has, does, and ever will purpose the final and universal salvation of his rational creatures.

Should it be admitted that the excellent morality of the bible leads to happiness in the same sphere in which it is obeyed ; but at the same

time, be objected that it can only make men happy through their obedience to its injunctions, we answer, this is admitting all we ask ; as it affords the two following inferences,

1. That God wills that all should obey, and 2, that those who obey should be happy. If therefore the Divine Author of this scheme of morality purposes it as the rule of conduct to be submitted to by the world ; will he not employ effectual means to accomplish this purpose, by inducing an universal obedience ?

Let us now, my friends, consider briefly some of those circumstances which encourage the belief that the excellent principles of moral conduct and feeling, enjoined by the New Testament will, sooner or later, be observed by the fulness of mankind. The first circumstance to which your attention is invited is this, viz. that the capacity of obedience, (being an inherent capacity in the soul, not proceeding from the present mode of our being, nor any future mode that may be given us,) will always accompany us, not only in this but a future state. To maintain the contrary, would be to deny that the soul will always in all worlds possess the power of loving its Maker and fellow creatures ; which would be making it an unfit subject for moral government, incapable alike of being morally happy or miserable.

2. There never will come a period when God will not require of every soul obedience to the Gospel in thought, feeling, and all such exercises as the mode of its existence renders contributory to the honor of God, and to happiness of men ; and therefore all his administrations towards men in every possible condition, must, either directly or indirectly, tend to effect in them those exercises and sentiments.

3. This code of pure and holy morals, is so connected with the heavenly doctrines of revelation as the fruit is with the tree that produces it ; and consequently, as the doctrines of the gospel furnish the motives to their practice, if the fruit be not good it will prove the tree is not good.

4. The moral precepts of the gospel are expressed in the clearest manner, and without the least ambiguity, describing not only what we are to do, and what we are not to do, and to whom, but setting forth in the plainest manner the principles, feelings, and motives, which are at all times to influence us.

So that he who desires to know his duty, and studies the scriptures for that purpose, cannot fail of learning it ; and not only this, but the ministers of Christ are directed to enforce it upon all people in all the world, and all parents required to impress a sense of it upon the tender minds of their children. To all which are added the pe-

culiar force of the most illustrious examples of Jesus, his apostles, and of early christians.

5. The principles of responsibility to a Father in heaven, who has all knowledge and all power, are made perfectly plain ; not being restrained to the present state, but extended to a future. So that on the one hand there is no danger of loosing our reward for well doing however long it may be deferred, nor on the other, any possibility of escaping the just punishment of evil doing, though it be *not speedily executed*, except by a sincere and hearty repentance followed by a genuine reformation.

6. The doctrine of rewards and punishments, connected with christian morality, and designed to act as motives to its obedience, are such as naturally excite our hopes and awaken our fears. The things promised are what we naturally most desire, and the evils threatened are those to which we have the most natural aversion. They are most reasonable, being just and salutary, *according to our works*, and the motives by which we are influenced therein.

7. We have now and always shall have the greatest interest in believing the doctrines, and conforming to the precepts of christianity. This interest cannot be affected by death ; for our happiness will depend on faith and reconciliation to God, in a future state, as much as it does in the present.

And this interest will be made more and more apparent to us by the enlightning influences of the Holy Spirit which God *will pour out upon all flesh*, and also by our own experience, which will never cease to teach us that holiness of heart is necessary to our happiness.

Now, if men will never cease to have the power to render obedience ; if God will never cease to require it ; if it be the natural effects of the doctrines of the gospel, as good fruit is the effect of a good tree ; if the duty of it be so plainly expressed as that all may easily know it ; if all men are now and ever will be responsible to God who sees the heart ; if the punishments as well as the rewards of the gospel tend to subdue and bring to obedience ; if man shall never cease to have an interest in conforming to the requirements of the gospel in regard to faith and practice, and if a thorough consciousness of that interest must and will be impressed on the heart of every man by the spirit of God, and by his own experience ; what, we respectfully ask, can prevent every creature from rendering a perfect obedience to those doctrines and precepts which are essential to their happiness, the desire of which is the strongest desire of their natures ? Can they be forever deceived in so plain a matter ; or continue forever knowingly, to sacrifice their own eternal happiness ?

Further, the scriptures appeal to our sense of propriety and self respect, saying, "walk worthy of your holy calling ;" to our sense of justice and humanity, "do unto others as you would that they should do unto you ;" to the sense of pure gratitude to our blessed Lord, who said, "love one another as I have loved you," and "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ;" and to the highest principle of emulation of which the soul is capable, requiring us to imitate our heavenly Father, which is at once our glory and happiness, saying "love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust."

By all these and other motives does the gospel persuade us to flee from the wrath to come and the punishment of the disobedient, and seek to encourage us to gain the reward of the righteous, with the final plaudit of our judge at the last day, of "well done good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

And He who instituted and employs these means, the merits and grace of his son Jesus Christ, and the influences of his holy and quickening spirit, to effect the obedience of the world, has assured us

of their success, saying "my people shall be willing in the day of my power;" so "that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, (angels and men who have died in faith) and things in earth, (all men living in the millenium) and things under the earth, (all who shall have died in unbelief); and that every tongue shall confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father;" living "according to God in the spirit." Psa. 110, 3. Phil. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iv. 6.

Have we not now shown that the christian scheme of moral sentiments and conduct is founded on God's unlimited benevolence towards the human race, and conduces to universal happiness? Have we not also answered the objection, that all will not yield obedience to these beneficent requirements, and therefore, will not be benefitted by them; by showing that the motives to this obedience will and must ultimately prevail, and a universe be made to share in its benefits? and is it not therefore true that the morality of the gospel, while it justly endears itself to every reasonable and benevolent mind by its benign influence upon individuals and society, is a most practical and powerful witness in favor of the universal restoration?

I now close by saying, "if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them;" for he that practices the precepts of revealed religion, honors its doc-

trines, and adorns the christian profession, promotes his own best interest, advances the salvation of the world, and contributes to the praise and glory of God ; wherefore I pray that heaven will abundantly *strengthen you unto every good word and work to do his will.*

LECTURE X.



PROOFS OF THE FINAL RESTORATION.

EPHESIANS, I. 9, 10.

"HAVING MADE KNOWN UNTO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PLEASURE, WHICH HE HATH PURPOSED IN HIMSELF : THAT IN THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES HE MIGHT GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE, ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, BOTH WHICH ARE IN HEAVEN, AND WHICH ARE ON EARTH ; EVEN IN HIM."

THIS evening, we propose to finish the present course of lectures by presenting to your consideration the arguments in favor of the Universal Restoration, deduced from the nature of man, and

the scriptural character of future happiness ; introductory to which, it is proper to notice some leading facts on the subject, stated in the text.

First. That the will, purpose, and pleasure of God, on the great subject of man's redemption and destiny, are precisely the same ; it is therefore no less his will, purpose, or decree, that every rational creature should sincerely repent, believe and obey the gospel, than it is his desire, and good pleasure, that they should so do and be saved.

Second. That it is the great object of Jehovah to subdue and unite under one spiritual ruler and head, even Christ, all the nations, and kindreds of men ; that they henceforth should forever enjoy his protection and favor, and be pure and happy in his service.

Third. That there is a set time when this great purpose of the Lord shall be accomplished, i. e. "the dispensation of the fulness of times ;" and hence we may not expect it previous to that time, nor doubt of its being then accomplished.

Fourth. That the kingdom of Christ, when perfected and united, will comprise all the inhabitants of earth and heaven ; so that not only all men and all angels will be under the dominion of Christ Jesus, their Lord and our's, but they will be *gathered together*, and united in their character and service—not separated.

On this subject, the best commentators agree that it is the glorious purpose of God to unite the Jews and Gentiles in the love and service of his son, Jesus Christ; to assemble the living and the dead in a future life of blessedness; and to gather the multitude of angels and the vast company of the redeemed, mutually to enjoy his kingdom, and forever to celebrate his praise!

What a blessed union will this be! What a glorious gathering of souls to Christ! The time of it, although future, will certainly come; for the scriptures assert in a very distinct manner, that Jesus must reign, *till he hath subdued all things unto himself*. And when this is done, but not before, he will resign the kingdom to the Father, that God may be *all in all*.

This doctrine of God's will to unite all men and angels in Christ, at the close of his dispensations towards them, is, in the text, called a mystery; but it is said to be such, only in reference to the time previous to its being fully revealed; for since its revelation, it is capable of being clearly understood, and is supported by the most satisfactory scripture proofs, as well as from the nature of man, and his final state of happiness.

What proof then, does this proposition derive from the nature and character of man?

In answering this inquiry, it must not be expected that we shall enter upon a detailed and phi-

losophical investigation of human nature. It will be necessary only to call the attention to some general traits of character, belonging to the human race, in common with each other, to show that it is reasonable and scriptural that they should collectively as well as individually, be gathered to the same state of happiness ; and these we shall learn from the holy scriptures themselves.

Man was distinguished in his creation from the whole animal race around him, by being made in the "image of God ;" by being formed last, and therefore, the most perfect in body, mind, and affections ; and by being placed over the other works of God. The care of the garden in which he was placed, and his dominion over all living on the earth and in the sea, liken him in his office and station, to the Supreme Governor of the universe. Let it be noted that this dominion is a joint dominion ; for, it is not true, to much extent, that any man individually has it : but associated, he holds it with ease. Hence the honor and advantages of it, belong to all as sharers. It is not so much the sway of physical as of mental power ; because reason and intelligence are the properties of the immortal soul, and not of the body. The soul is the seat of virtue, reason and skill ; and its influence and dominion are given, directed, and restrained by its Maker. It governs the body, in which it is placed, in a most wonderful manner,

directing its energies and restraining its propensities, at its own will. And, by employing the body as its instrument, and by other means within its command, it governs the animal creation, traverses and subdues the earth, navigates the seas and gathers their treasure ; it erects governments, establishes commerce, and cultivates the arts and sciences ; it erects cities, rears temples, and forms associations commensurate with earth itself. By it also he analyses the earth, the air, and the light ; ascends to the heavens, names, numbers and classifies the stars ; looks on the far distant planets, traces their course in their mighty orbits, and reduces to system and harmony their vast and mazy movements in the immensity of space. And by faith, the soul explores a future and a higher world, lives a future life, ascends to the throne of its Maker, and lays up its treasure in heaven

Now when we consider these distinctions and powers possessed by the creature man—the peculiar notice taken of his creation by the angels of God, those elder sons of paradise, who, as morning stars and sons of the Highest, sang together and shouted for joy at the birth of the great progenitor of men—when we reflect upon the vastness, the variety and usefulness of every part of the creation placed under his control, and see that nothing was made in vain, is it reasonable to suppose that man, made for such dignity, and to confer such pro-

tection and happiness on all other creatures, should himself be unhappy? Here let it be remarked, that the happiness suited to the nature of man, is, like his dominion, a joint one; and to be perfectly happy, they must all be happy.

Again: The human family are *one* by nature; for God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Therefore the national and other distinctions and differences, which exist among men, must all pass away, and *one* condition be finally assigned to them all, as most suited to their character as social beings—as the offspring of one earthly progenitor, from whom they derived their common nature, capacities, senses, desires, and aversions—and as best computing with their responsibility to *one* heavenly Father for the manner in which they employ their powers, and improve their means of happiness, individual and social. They possessed the earth, originally, as tenants in common, and are alike capable of living in every climate and region of it, and of finding there the comforts of life for their support; which shows that God is equally good to them as the inhabitants of this world, having made equal provision for their temporal happiness.

Further, mankind have equally apostatised from their Maker, and violated their obligations to him; "for all have sinned and come short of the glory

of God." If therefore the purpose of the Lord be changed in regard to any, on account of sin, it must be equally changed in regard to all ; for all have sinned. Nor is this all. *One* Saviour hath come down from heaven to live, suffer and die for their universal redemption ; and if his mediation be sufficient to restore any part, consistently with their free agency, why is it not so for the restoration of the residue ?

Now, seeing the whole posterity of Adam inherit his nature, his capacities, his obligations, and his guilt, by their descent from him, and by their adopting his character ; it in justice follows that his destiny will be theirs ; for if God created Adam for happiness, then he created all his descendants to share the same felicity ; for they, in their nature, are but the first man extended. To say therefore that God made the first and great progenitor of mankind for misery, would be saying that he intended the whole race for the same end ; which no one can admit for a moment.

Hence we infer from the unity of human nature, the joint dominion given to it over the works of God, the similarity of the capacities of men, their equal responsibility and guilt, and the equal means provided for their welfare, here and hereafter ; that they will not be separated from each other in their final destination. This inference is supported by the consideration of the vast and in-

comprehensible capacities of the human intellect for improvement in knowledge, virtue, and the social principle ; by its capacity for the service of men, and for communion with God ; and by the actual proficiency which has been made in science, devotion, and philanthropy, by such persons as Newton, Fenelon, Howard, and many others. The principles which governed these men in their illustrious course, are capable of being brought to act on all human minds as a stimulent leading them to emulate the bright examples of their distinguished lives. And to what heights of refinement, knowledge and sympathy, is not the human mind capable of being advanced by the means of grace and the power of God ? Will the All-Wise Creator, then, suffer such capacities to be forever lost to himself, to their possessors, and to the world ? Surely not. For God himself hath proclaimed his solemn purpose to bring them to be perfect, to be *one* in Christ—to be *one* in heaven. Eph. i. 10 ; iv. 13. Rev. v. 13. If such be not the purpose of God, why are all men called to the practice of virtue, and to seek a state of glory ? Why are we required to offer prayers for all, and to practice universal benevolence ? Why did Jesus give himself a ransom for all ; send his gospel to every creature ; and promise the outpouring of the holy spirit upon all flesh ? Do not these things, which are admitted by all christians, show clearly that it

is the plan and counsel of the Lord, to bring all his rational creatures, as a united family, to glorify his name, and to enjoy his kingdom forever?

Second. Let us inquire into the proofs of this sentiment, afforded by the nature and character of the happiness of the redeemed, as described in the holy scriptures. It will be kept in mind that the question under discussion is this, viz. whether the final happiness of mankind will be universal, or extend only to a part. In seeking the evidence of its universality, we may first notice some things in regard to the nature of heavenly felicity; which we shall attempt with a reverence befitting its sacred character.

Heaven is a pure, spiritual and happy state of the perfected souls and bodies of the redeemed; immortal, sanctified and forever delivered from all suffering and death, and blessed with the beatific vision of God, of Christ, and of angels—with a view of the unfolded mysteries of eternity, the glories of redemption, and the joy of saints—an enchanting sense of the divine favor, and of an overflowing gratitude for the unutterable grace which pitied and redeemed them, with the happy assurance of the endless perpetuity of all their bliss. It is not local, that is, its inhabitants do not derive their happiness wholly from the place, but principally from the moral and reconciled state of the soul—from a holy communion with God, and a sacred regard to each

other as fellow heirs of glory. Hence the idea that men can go there by means of any physical change, such as death or the resurrection, without any mental preparation or renewal of heart, is most visionary and unfounded. That, however, there is in the universe a place where God will make special manifestations of his glory ; where the saints will be gathered and united with the holy angels ; and where there will be appropriate and refined pleasures, suited to the spiritualised senses of the immortal body, and that this place is properly called heaven, is most likely.

There is in the scriptures a great variety of imagery employed to set forth the nature and felicity of this heavenly state. It is compared to a country, abounding with health, peace, plenty, safety and righteousness ;—whose rivers are pure, and whose trees are ever blooming and yielding their fruit every month ;—whose mountains are brought low, and whose valleys are exalted, making one vast beautiful plain, beneath a glory far surpassing the brightness of the sun in his strength. To this “ better country,” the inhabitants of every region shall triumphantly and joyfully come to sit down “ with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,” and share with them its happy society, and its blissful scenes.

Again, it is likened to a kingdom, whose king is most wise, powerful and good ; whose laws are most righteous, holy and equal ; whose subjects are

the most united, secure, loyal, and happy. A kingdom which will swallow up the glory of all other kingdoms in its growth and grandeur, and surpass all other dominions in the perpetuity of its reign, and the eternity of its prosperity and splendor. To a city, with pearly gates and golden streets,—beautiful squares, and rich dwellings; living fountains and righteous citizens. To a house eternal in the heavens, with spacious mansions, and sure foundations. To a rich and splendid feast, attended by numerous, intelligent, and congenial guests. To a family of heavenly descent, divine parentage, rich inheritance, and numerous members, gathered from earth and heaven, to dwell together forever in the sweetest communion of fellowship and love. And to a chorus of celestial praise to God and the Lamb, in which every creature in the universe are performers on the golden harps of eternity, each contributing his share to the harmony and to the happiness of all.

What is the principle that runs through all these images of future happiness? Is it not that of association or the combining of many in one body? It requires many people to make a great and happy nation—many subjects to make a powerful and prosperous kingdom, and many citizens to compose a city of distinguished advantages. The same principle holds true in the case of an assembly, a family, or a concert of praise. Men individually

can perform or enjoy but little ; but when associated in a proper manner, they can perform wonders, and produce surprising sensations of pleasure and happiness. Human nature is decidedly social, being formed to live in families, cities, and kingdoms ; but ultimately to be united in one universal empire of peace and joy.

Another principle observable in the above images of happiness, is that of unity in the character, feelings and views of those who are associated. in order to their individual or social welfare and pleasure. For, "how can two walk together except they be agreed?" But when all men "shall be of one heart and of one mind," and "see eye to eye;" then shall the knowledge and glory of the Lord fill the earth "as the waters cover the sea."

The happiness of heaven therefore, like the happiness of the present world, is social, and to be perfect, must be mutual, and to be mutual, all who share it must have the same qualifications. If then holiness be necessary to heaven, all who are admitted there, must possess it ; and if they are equally happy, must be equally holy. If repentance and faith be prerequisites to holiness, then those who leave this world in unbelief and impenitence, are unholy and unprepared for heaven. Yet the felicity of heaven, to be perfect, must be universal, and hence those that are not prepared in this life, must be qualified for it in another and fu-

ture, i. e. an intermediate state. And for this purpose, the means of grace and repentance must as necessarily extend through the intermediate state, and the age of judgment, as does the kingdom of Christ, who "is Lord" and Ruler "of the dead and living," to whom all that die in unbelief must bow, according as we have shown in a previous lecture. To illustrate the social nature of happiness, we may look at the descriptions of it, given above. Take for instance, that given under the idea of a family. The happiness of a family is strictly social and reciprocal; for if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it," so that *no one liveth or dieth to himself*, but each liveth for the good of the others. This agrees perfectly with our experience; for while one parent, brother or sister of an affectionate family be sick, or suffers greatly in body or mind, every member shares the calamity. The same principle holds good in the case of a city; if sickness and pestilence prevail; if poverty and want oppress; if vice and irreligion spread corruption among the youth, every citizen participates in the evil, and sympathises with the immediate sufferers. And it becomes more and more so, as the citizens become refined in their feelings, and improved in the religious, moral and social virtues of the heart. The lively

and sincere christian, shares much more largely in the tribulations around him, than does the hardened and scoffing infidel. The happiness of good men, therefore, in the present world, is severely taxed by the criminal and innocent sufferings which every where salute his eyes, and appeal to his heart. Were there in our favored city, for the year to come, to be no sickness, death, mourning—no intemperance, fraud, lasciviousness—no malice, evil speaking, or contention—but were perfect benevolence, cheerfulness and plenty to be universal among us; would not the happiness of the best men, and sincerest christians, be much advanced from what it now is? Truly it would. But would it be as much so, if all the vicious were to be banished, as if they were to be reformed? Answer, O ye parents, who deplore the vices of some of your dear children; answer it, every good citizen. Yet were the vicious already out of it, how should we be shocked at the proposal to admit them into such a peaceful and happy association, without their being first separated from their destructive and pestilential vices! But if so prepared to add to our number and happiness, how joyfully should we hail their admission! “Even so there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

These principles applied to the whole human race, prove that as a family or city, cannot be perfectly blessed while any of its members are

separated from them, or are vicious and miserable with them ; so no one of all mankind can be perfect in felicity, until all their number are perfected in Christ, and joined with them in the joys of heaven. Hence, the social character of heaven, as well as the unity and sympathy of human nature, prove that happiness must be universal ; because otherwise it cannot be perfect, neither in degree, nor extent.

Now he that wills the perfection of human felicity, will surely so refine the hearts of all his ransomed children, by his grace ; so quicken and expand their sympathies by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit ; and so enlarge their understandings and views by the light of the gospel, as that they shall look upon all people as their brethren, love them as they do their own souls, and feel rising high in their sympathetic bosoms the raptures of heavenly joy at the safe arrival of each from the captivity of death and sin to the freedom of perfect rest in the paradise of God. And this noble sympathy, so completely resembling the compassion of Jesus who pitied a lost world and redeemed it by his ignominious and painful death, will be the source of the purest and sublimest pleasure, derived from the happiness of others ; but which, should one of the vast fraternity of the human race fail of gaining it, would fill heaven with weeping at the distant sound of his hopeless wailings in endless despair.

But, I forbear—Christ having wept over a fallen world in the arms of death ; God will wipe tears from off all faces, that the followers of the Lamb may henceforth forever “rejoice with them that do rejoice.” Here no mother will lament a daughter lost ; no father grieve over the ruin of a prodigal son. Here every soul will have felt the evil of sin, its need of a Saviour, and its obligations to divine grace ; it will have passed the scenes of bitter repentance, stood before the judgment seat of Christ, plead guilty before God, sought and obtained pardon in the name of Jesus. Here each will wear the robes of a Saviour’s grace, and be crowned with a Saviour’s righteousness ; and all be united in perfect love to God and each other, and in celebrating the fadeless glories of redemption.

This glorious restitution of all things, of which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began, is a result of the christian system devoutly to be desired. It will be the capstone of the moral and spiritual temple of virtue and glory ; it will confer immortal honor and praise upon its divine founder and builder ; and it will be the source of endless joy and blessedness to the redeemed. To it there are no well founded objections, as has been shown. The scriptural views of election—that all are chosen of God to aid in rearing it, and finally to enjoy it, are in its

favour ; the condition and means of grace will all aid its completion ; the punishments of the wicked being not endless but emendatory, will be its powerful support ; and hence the genuine tendency of its prevalence in society, must be to check and remedy the spread of vice and irreligion, and to promote the triumph of virtue and piety among men. And not only this, but the united operation of all the attributes of God ; the mission, works, and death of Christ ; the united voice of revelation ; the tendency of the moral precepts of the gospel ; the nature of man, and the character of his future happiness, all join to establish it as the truth of God founded on the Rock of Ages.

This doctrine also establishes the certainty of a future, just and equitable punishment for those who die impenitent, and the gracious and salutary design of such a retribution ; and therefore proves most conclusively and rationally that the doctrine of no future punishment on the one hand, and of endless misery on the other, are unscriptural and pernicious : the one releasing men from a suitable sense of their responsibility to God, and of their obligations to profess and obey the christian religion, and the other clothing the character of God and of christianity with an inexorable severity, subversive of the grand design of God to gather together in one all things in Christ.

To conclude, my beloved brethren, I now commend to your serious consideration and devout obedience, the doctrine of the *restoration*, as one most happily suited to make men truly religious without being superstitious; liberal and cheerful, without levity and skepticism; a doctrine equally necessary to the happiness of each, and one therefore in which all should feel an equal interest—against which there is no objection, and in favor of which, reason and revelation both unite—which, when it shall be accomplished, will perfect the will of God, and answer the prayers of his saints; exhibit the happy result of all the means of grace, and give to virtue and piety, their endless triumph; and thus fill the universe with the hal-
lelujahs of salvation and glory to God and the Lamb, forever and ever, Amen.

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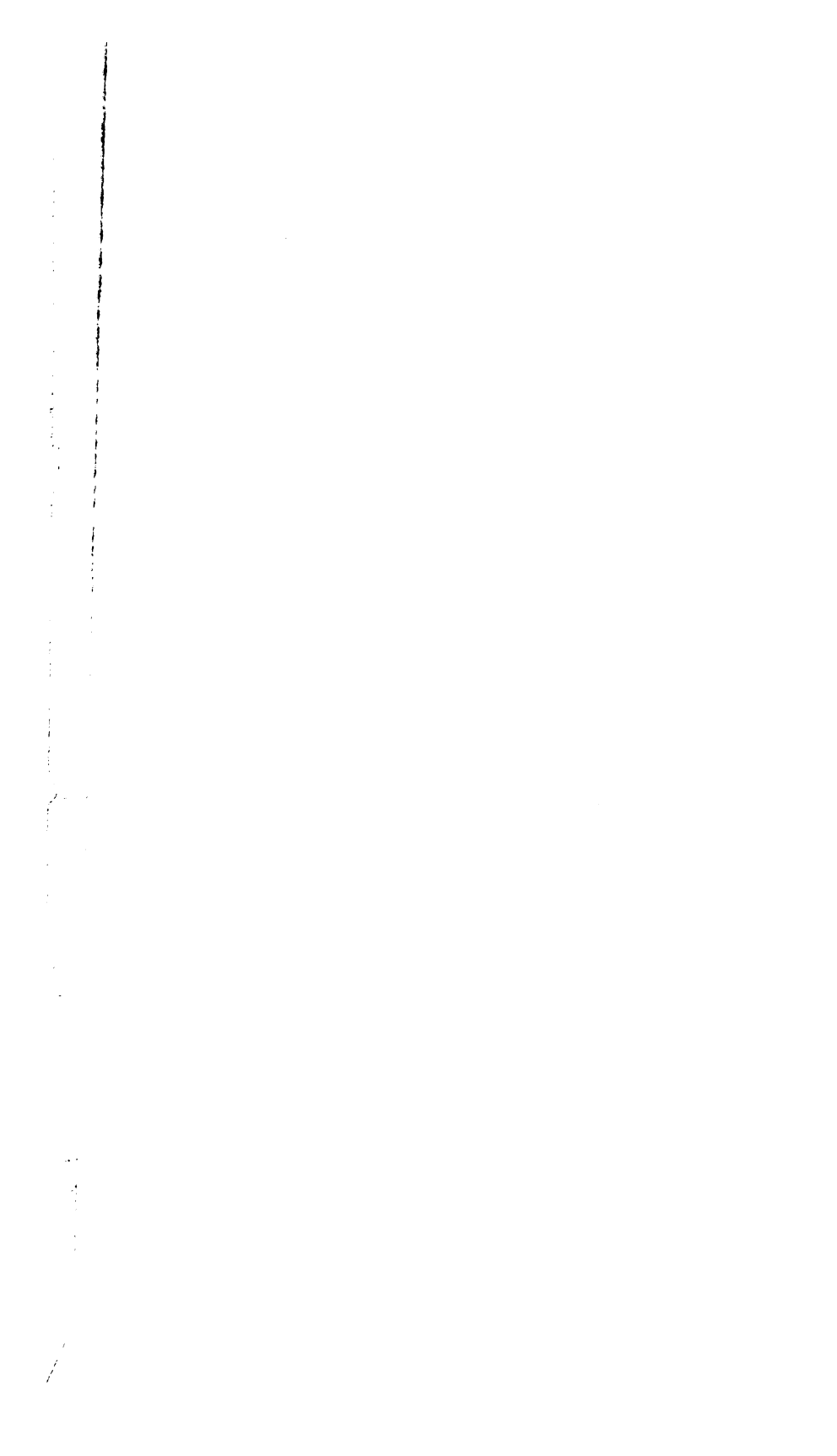
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